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MICHAEL FERRYS.¹

BY MRS. HENRY DE LA PASTURE.

[LADY CLIFFORD.]

CHAPTER XVI.

‘DEAREST Lady Gryffydd,’ wrote Mrs. Kelson, from her house in Grosvenor Place, ‘We are such old friends that I have no hesitation in writing to you as I should write to no one else. I mark this letter *Private*, and then I know that it is only as though we were chatting over the fire, and so I can speak quite, quite freely.

‘I am inclined to think, dearest, that your judgment, after all, was sounder than mine in your *continued distrust* of Mr. Ferrys. If you remember, I took his part *warmly* when we were talking about him the other day, and thought your scruples rather far-fetched; but I did honestly believe that, as I told you, a reformed rake made the best husband. Now I begin to wonder if I was not led away by my desire to think the best of everyone, into being too sanguine about his improvement. After all, an engagement to a sweet girl like Winefride ought to keep him as straight as though he were actually married; and in fact, *straighter*, since after marriage there would not be the same fear of losing her.

‘What I am going to tell you now will not, I fear, surprise you, dearest, as it did me, since you have been so suspicious of him from the first; in fact you will be justified in saying “I told you so.” But there it is! I suppose I am credulous; worldly wisdom seems to pass over my head. And he looked so nice and so handsome; I suppose one ought *not* to be influenced by people’s looks, but one is; and even last night, sorry as I was to see him under the circumstances, I caught myself asking him to dinner from sheer pity, and perhaps the feeling that I might be able to warn him kindly that he was *not* acting very wisely, nor even

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rightly by our dear little Winefride. Not that he needs much warning, with his experience, alas ! in such matters ; but he has never been an engaged man before, and perhaps does not understand that he ought now to be more careful, and not be seen dining *tête-à-tête* in public restaurants with—but there I go, making excuses for him again. Forgive my weakness, dearest, but as I said, he is such a nice-looking boy, and after all in years, from *our* point of view, *only* a boy. I can assure you I don't feel the least inclined to make excuses for *her*. I mean the person he was with, of whom, unhappily, I know only too much, and far more than she guesses. I saw her take a good look at me when she thought I was busy with my dinner ; but as you always say, I have eyes in the back of my head, and I knew what she was up to fast enough, though I made no sign whatever. Of course I saw in a moment that she wanted to see if I *looked as if I meant to recognise her* : as she perceived immediately that I had no such intention she took care not to meet my eye. If she *had*, however, I meant to give her a look she would not have forgotten in a hurry ; as much as to say, *If you think I've forgotten the way you behaved on board ship you're very much mistaken !* But she was too wise to give me the chance, and hurried past me, which enabled me to get in a word with the young man alone. He was in such a fidget to be after her all the time, that I was sorry to see it ; especially as it made him refuse my invitation with more haste than politeness.

'Dearest, *why* do men do these things ? Mind, I am not saying there is any harm in it as far as *he* is concerned, though I should be sorry to say the same of *her*.

'Mrs. Carseleigh is her horrid name, which puts me in mind of a corpse, I can't think why, except that she affects that sort of dead white complexion (enamel) with her really *scarlet* hair. She used to get a great deal of sympathy at Cairo, by going about looking perfectly miserable, with that kind of one-sided droop which takes some people in so easily, and talking in that half-alive languid way one knows so well. I believe Major Carseleigh is drinking himself to death, and I'm bound to say he's a most horrid-looking creature, but she must have known that when she married him, which she pretends was from the schoolroom, but he told me himself she had had seven seasons in Cairo first. So even if she came out at seventeen she can't have been less than four- or five-and-twenty, and in France, as you know, dearest, they "*coiffer Ste. Catherine*" at that age. So don't tell me ! She was by way of being a hoyden then, but I suppose she now finds the die-away,

misunderstood pose more successful. However that may be, one sees her confiding in *everyone*, and giving away her poor husband to every willing (male) listener she meets; and I will say she contrives, one way and another, to meet a good many.

'You would not have been deceived for a moment, but in my weak good nature, I was *for a time*, though several of the residents warned me against her, and one went so far as to call her a *husband-snatcher*. Still, he looked such a brute, and I really believed in her delicate health—till I found she could ride for a couple of hours daily before breakfast with Mr. Ferrys; and dance till three in the morning four nights a week without turning a hair. I *then* began to prick up my ears, and heard the most awful stories (too long to write). But I continued *just* to bow to her, wishing to err on the side of charity—as I'm afraid I do too often—*until* we got on board ship; and there I saw for myself what she was, when she scraped acquaintance with a friend of ours, Lord Rosterleigh, and monopolised him completely. She must have introduced herself to him, and he to her, for to my certain knowledge they had never met before we started; and you may be sure *I* did not lift a finger to make them acquainted. I can't tell you how they went on. He must have known what *I* thought, for he was afraid to come near me. Everyone was talking about them; and even making bets that instead of leaving the ship at Marseilles with the rest of us, as was his known intention, he would go on to London with her: which sure enough he did, in spite of there being so many people on board who knew her husband. He is, as you have probably heard, dearest, rather a notorious man; and everyone says poor Lady Rosterleigh could have divorced him over and over again, but for some reason she will never believe a word against him. But I heard *quite by chance*, from a fellow-passenger whom I asked about them, that on arriving in London she saw them both at the very same hotel she went to for the night.

'This will show you only too plainly the *sort of thing*; and I do think that in your place, and feeling as you do, about Mr. Ferrys, you should ask him to explain himself. If he is taking this Mrs. C. about with him everywhere *now*, what guarantee have you that he will not continue to do so after he's married? These red-haired women are very dangerous, and remember she was called a *husband-snatcher*. But I need say no more, for I know you are far more rigid than I am in your ideas, indeed, *I*, if anything, am too lax, and willing to let my fellow creatures go their own way thinking no evil. But in *this* case, *knowing Mrs. C.*, my blood

boiled, and I said to myself, *No*, dear little Winefride and her mother live out of the world and have no idea what is going on, and it is my duty as a friend to warn them. Whatever they do must be done with their eyes *wide open*. Mind, dear Lady Gryffydd, I have only told you *what I saw* and *what I know*. I am not saying there was any harm in *this* case. Only that if Mr. Ferrys wants to avoid *the appearance of evil* (as we are so strictly told to do) he should not be seen alone in public places with the wrong kind of woman; in which case he wouldn't be seen dining alone at a public restaurant with any woman at all, as the right kind *don't do these things*. And it is not as if there were any pretence of joining a party, as we happened to go to the same theatre, and though they didn't see us as we were a long way behind them, I spotted them in a moment. There they were, *à deux*, just as you would expect in such circumstances.

'Well, dearest, I must apologise for the length of this letter, but I have gone into details because I feel in writing a warning of this kind one *can't* be too careful to leave out nothing. I shall be so impatient for your answer; and you need not thank me for the trouble I have taken, though I will frankly own it *has* been difficult to find the time; you know how one is rushed in London. But when it is a question of giving a helping hand, I never hesitate, especially where my *friends* are concerned; and indeed I have felt it not only a duty, *but a pleasure*, to write you all this.

Your most affectionate,

AGNETA KELSON.

There had been a slight coolness between Lady Gryffydd and her sister at the beginning of Mrs. Loveden's annual summer visit to Aberfraw, which arose in consequence of some fastidiousness being displayed by Sims, who was not so fond as her mistress was of getting away from London and spending several quiet weeks on the Welsh borderland.

Lady Gryffydd was inclined to reprove Sims for unsociableness, and to champion the cause of her own domestics, who accused the maid of being a fine lady and wishful to give herself airs.

Sims' retort to her equals was that she had kept herself to herself all her life, and proposed to continue the process until the end of her days; but in the face of Lady Gryffydd's gentle expostulation she wept so bitterly that the soft heart of her hostess was melted, while Mrs. Loveden began to be annoyed that anyone besides herself should lecture her maid.

Nothing can exceed a Londoner's scorn of a rustic, except perhaps a countryman's contempt for a cockney ; so that no more than an outward harmony could be established in the household by the united efforts of the two ladies, aided by the gentle peace-making Winefride, who was beloved by all parties to the quarrel.

Lady Gryffydd and Mrs. Loveden were a trifle more dignified than usual in their attitude towards each other, thus attempting to disguise a faint hidden resentment which rendered both exceedingly uncomfortable.

It was the arrival of Mrs. Kelson's letter, strangely enough, which restored cordiality, for Lady Gryffydd was so anxious to impart the contents, and Mrs. Loveden so eager to hear them, that the grievance was forgotten ; and they discussed it eagerly together.

'Mrs. Kelson is a woman of the world,' said Lady Gryffydd.

'But I must say, if you will forgive me, dearest, for saying so of a friend of yours, that she is rather a spiteful one,' said Mrs. Loveden, warmly. 'Why, for instance, this stab at the poor woman because she has red hair ? How can she help the colour of her hair ?'

'Many people have a prejudice against it,' said Lady Gryffydd, defending her friend. 'I do not say it is just. I am told it is particularly attractive to others, and I cannot say I have any feeling about it one way or the other, myself. But there it is. Besides, the colour of her hair has nothing to do with her conduct.'

'Still, it shows that Mrs. Kelson has unreasonable prejudices. Depend upon it, Mary Theresa, quite a different account of this dinner might be given by a more charitable person. Perhaps Michael has dined with her and her husband in Cairo, and was merely returning their hospitality. And if she has really so many enemies he might well be puzzled to know whom to invite to meet her. Besides, you, and even I, live so much out of the world that we cannot tell what free and easy ways may be fashionable now among younger people.'

'Mrs. Kelson does not live out of the world, and from what she says it is evidently not the right thing for a lady to dine alone at a restaurant with a gentleman and go to a play. To me it appears quite dreadful, and especially with her poor husband drinking himself to death in Cairo. How can she have the heart to go to a theatre at all in such circumstances ?'

'That is nonsense, dearest. The poor woman must need something to distract her thoughts from her misery.'

'One would think you approved her behaviour, Lucy Agnes!'

'I am far from approving of her. I think her most imprudent; but I would not willingly think of her as anything more than imprudent,' said Mrs. Loveden, colouring all over her rather large, waxen countenance.

Lady Gryffydd's pale blue eyes looked beseechingly into her sister's steady sensible grey orbs.

'I am sure I am the last to indulge in rash judgment,' she said, almost weeping, 'and I could not help growing very fond of dear Michael when he was here last. He has such coaxing ways, and he was taken up heart and soul with the plans for rebuilding the Abbey. Nobody could help being touched. But a letter like this upsets me, Lucy Agnes, and revives all my old doubts of him. I feel while he is here with Winefride, all is right; but he is so easy-going and indolent, and has so little real principle, that the moment he is out of her sight he is not much to be depended upon.'

'I do not think the letter proves that, and I think Mrs. Kelson is much biased by her obvious annoyance that Michael would not accept her invitation to dinner.'

'I never thought of that,' confessed Lady Gryffydd.

'I noticed it directly. She evidently sat down and wrote the letter off in a pet. I daresay, poor thing, she is very sorry by this time that she wrote it at all; and I do hope you won't trouble dear Winefride about it, for she had a long letter from Michael this morning, and looked so happy that I was quite touched to see the brightness of her face.'

'It is not a subject on which I could speak to Winefride, though I am not very good at keeping secrets. Children are so sharp. And besides, she would only fire up if I said a word against Michael, for she and Bernard look upon him as a hero; whereas after all he is only an indolent young man with no religion to keep him straight, and far too much money to spend.'

'By the grace of God, dearest, he may have a religion very soon; for Winefride said her letter was from Fort Aloysius, and I cannot believe she would have looked as radiant as she did if she had not found fresh food for hope in it.'

'She finds fresh food for hope in all he says and does,' said Lady Gryffydd, shaking her head; but her sister uttered a warning *Hush!* for at that moment Winefride came into the room.

She carried in her hands a great jar of dog-rose, and woodland fern, and tall foxglove, which almost hid her slender form. Through

the topmost sprays shone her fair hair, and her pretty flushed face and gay blue eyes.

'You look like a ray of sunshine coming into this dark room,' said Mrs. Loveden, fondly.

'Why is it a dark room? Are your eyes troubling you, Mamma?'

'They are a little weak,' admitted Lady Gryffydd. 'That jar is far too heavy for you, darling. Why not get Barney to carry it?'

'He would knock the branches out of place, and I have taken pains to arrange them.'

'You have so much taste, my dear,' said Mrs. Loveden.

'But she wanders too far hunting for wild flowers and odd weeds, when the gardens are full of flowers,' complained her mother.

'I like the wild ones best, and so does Michael, and I take the garden flowers for the altar.'

'She does all the flowers for the church,' said Lady Gryffydd. 'I don't know who would do them if——'

'Thekla does them better than I. Wouldn't you like one blind up, Mamma? I don't know how you can see to read your letters.'

'I've only one letter, and a very unpleasant one at that,' said poor Lady Gryffydd.

'Is it Mrs. Kelson?'

'There now! Did I not tell you, Lucy Agnes? What is the use of trying to keep anything to myself in this house?' cried Lady Gryffydd, helplessly. 'I'm sure I don't know how they find out everything.'

'You said it was an unpleasant letter, and I don't know anyone else who would be likely to write you unpleasant letters,' said Winefridewonderingly. 'Besides, Michaelsays he saw her in London.'

The sisters exchanged glances. 'You see,' said Mrs. Loveden, under her breath.

'Did he say where?'

'At the Savoy restaurant.' With a smile and a blush she drew the manifold letter from her pocket, and read an extract.

'You see, he makes no mystery of it whatever,' said Mrs. Loveden, triumphantly.

'Why should he make mysteries? He has no secrets from me,' said Winefride, holding her head very high. 'Mrs. Kelson has no business to write unkindly of Michael. I don't even wish to hear what she said. She must be a wicked woman.'

Lady Gryffydd hung her head as her daughter left the room, and Mrs. Loveden said no more ; nor did Winefride reopen the subject to her mother and aunt ; but that night she wrote to her sister and confidante.

' Oh, my darling Thekla, rejoice with me, for *he* is nearer to us than he has ever been before, and I believe that our Lord will answer our prayers. You know, I offered my earthly happiness, all my hopes, my very life, if He willed, for this great gift of grace to be given to my darling. Perhaps God does not require this sacrifice . . .

' The more I think of him, the more I feel that a soul so noble, so delicately thoughtful for the feelings of others, so generous and affectionate and careless of self, must be specially dear to our Lord, and that He will listen to the prayers which have been offered all over the world for Michael, and grant him that Faith which he himself desires so earnestly to possess. Oh, my darling Thekla, I think of him at Fort Aloysius listening to the good counsels of the holy monks, who are so much better able to help him than I could ever be, and I am so happy over his dear letters that I could cry for joy.

' Mrs. Kelson has written unkindly of Michael to Mamma, simply because he showed kindness to a poor woman she does not like, but who is an old friend of his : a lady in great trouble, with a husband who *drinks* ! He took her out to dine and to a theatre. Could any but an evil mind find harm in such a simple action ? For a moment I was wickedly filled with such anger against her that I could not speak ; but of course I have got over it, and prayed for forgiveness ; for how can she know what Michael is ? He does not show his real nature to everyone. He cares naturally only for what is good, but his very kindnesses are misunderstood because he is so careless of what people think. But that I should let a little thing like a spiteful letter trouble me when I have this great happiness of his love, and this great anxiety filling my mind ! I count the days to your coming home, my darling, and seeing Michael at last. He is so *much* better-looking than the photograph I sent you ! I know you will love him at first sight ; he has such an attractive face. But when you know him, it will be his nature that will attract you even more than his looks. Go on praying, darling Thekla, for your brother-to-be, but I know you will ; it is the only wish I have in the world now, that he may receive the gift of Grace. . . . '

CHAPTER XVII.

'SWEETHEART,' wrote Michael, after giving the particulars of his doings in London which Winefride had read aloud to her mother and aunt, 'you will want to hear all I can tell you of Fort Aloysius. I arrived yesterday afternoon, having come from Edinburgh *vid* Perth and Inverness, and by great good luck travelled with an acquaintance whom I have always liked, and who now bids fair to become a friend of mine—one Alaric Tremaine; a giant hailing from the borders of Devon and Somerset; a splendid fellow—burnt an even brown, with eyes startling in their blueness, and bronze hair thick upon his massive head. He is thirty-seven years old—scarce ten years my senior, and has already seen nearly twenty years' service in the East; though he is such a magnificent specimen of a man that it is clear the Tropics have done him no harm. I needn't tell you what an idle, useless beggar I feel beside him. He has come to Fort Aloysius to see his young brother Cuthbert, who is a novice here. I hadn't any idea that he was a Catholic. . . . The run down the Caledonian Canal in the little steamer was delightful—heather-covered hills, with the canal threading its way at their base; clumps of wood, and now and then a small village, but for the most part no sign of man or beast. The Canal opened into a sort of lake about a couple of miles above the monastery, and as we turned into this the Abbey burst upon our view—a monument of cold grey stone against the green of the hill-side.

'A lay brother had been sent to meet us and take charge of our luggage; and when this had been placed in a small cart we set off on foot; he leading his shaggy pony, and Tremaine and I walking by his side.

'The lay brother was just a rough peasant lad, with a bright and honest face. He answered our questions civilly, but volunteered no remarks on his own account.

'The guest-master, Father Petroc's brother, greeted us with a smile so like his that I could have laughed.

'He was very polite to me, but to Tremaine effusive; beaming upon him with an affectionate admiration that pleased me.

"A very great man, you know—a very great man," he said; "one of our Empire-builders. We are all very proud to welcome him here." Tremaine seemed quite at home, and remained in the

parlour to greet his brother, who had been sent for ; but I was ill at ease.

'I was taken upstairs to a small, very clean bedroom, which he told me was reserved for me as long as I chose to occupy it.

'It contained a truckle-bed, over which a crucifix was nailed to a lime-washed wall ; a chest of drawers which served also as a dressing-table ; two chairs and a washstand.

' " You'll be ready for your supper," he said, smiling. " It will be served in the refectory."

' " But how shall I find my way ? "

' " I'll come and fetch you. You won't be long ? We don't dress for dinner here." This small jest served as an excuse for another hearty laugh.

'He did not give me much law, and I had barely time to wash and change before he returned.

'He led the way down the stairs, and along a passage which turned into a wide cloister running round an open space of grass.

'I observed that the guest-house was only an *annexe* to the great monastery.

'We passed through a lobby and thence into a lofty room, with an arched oaked ceiling, and ecclesiastical-looking windows set high in the walls, and with long tables flanking its sides.

'A single table stood on a dais at the end of the room. Behind this was a high-backed carved chair ; but the other tables had only wooden forms placed between them and the wall, by way of sitting accommodation. I was shown my place at the extreme end of one of these forms, and found myself next to Tremaine.

'The distant sound of low chanting attracted my attention. It grew momentarily louder, and presently a long procession of monks, with their cowls drawn and their hands hidden in their full sleeves, and crossed before them, began to file into the refectory, walking two and two. They broke off to right and left, and took their stand between the forms and the table, with their backs to the wall.

'The abbot, a portly old monk distinguished from his fellows by the heavy gold chain with its dependent cross which was hung about his neck, brought up the rear, and marched to the table reserved for him on the dais. At a sign from him a Latin grace was chanted.

'After bowing to the abbot, all save half a dozen monks seated themselves. The six were told off for the day to wait upon their fellows. One other mounted a pulpit between the dais and the right-hand table, and at a sign from the abbot began to read aloud.

'He read the life of some saint in a high-pitched, expressionless voice, and the only other sound in the room was the chink of crockery, besides the soft footfall of the monks who waited at table.

'The meal consisted of soup, a joint of boiled mutton, vegetables, and a hunk of bread. A large jug of ale was placed before Tremaine and myself, but for the rest only water was served.

'The monks drew back their cowls as soon as they were seated, and I then had an opportunity of observing their faces.

'I hadn't much difficulty in recognising the younger Tremaine—one of the nicest-looking boys I ever saw. A great hulking fellow like his brother, with the same extraordinary blue eyes. An athlete by training, as was obvious—an honest, open, laughing countenance. I couldn't help saying to myself, What a shame for a splendid fellow like that to be cooped up here! But this will vex you, my darling! Consider it unwritten.

'Young Cuthbert Tremaine's name in religion is Brother David, which suits him well, for he is certainly "ruddy and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look upon." The only prize I won at my dame-school was for Scripture history, beloved, and it interested me greatly, but I observe that you never recognise my quotations from the Old Testament.

'Next to Brother David was a sallow sour-visaged youth called Brother Canice, with thin lips that spoke of temper suppressed, and red-rimmed eyes, and a rather timid, brow-beaten look. But the novice that interested me most was one rejoicing in the strange name of Brother Emidius.

'Quite young, with a face almost transparent in its whiteness, and sunken clear blue eyes beneath a great overhanging brow: the only face among the novices that bore the outward impression of an intense spiritual nature.

'Among the professed monks, there was of course every variety of expression upon faces intellectual, faces animal, faces simple, faces ascetic; but this in common honesty must I write you, my Winefride—that the bitterest sceptic, the most impatient critic who ever held a man's life wasted that was given to this thralldom—could not deny that the predominant expression in all that variety of the human countenance was that of peace.

'A peace that could not fairly be called apathetic, nor anything approaching it. Rather the look of men freed for ever from the wearing fret of doubt or indecision; a kind of serene light-heartedness.

'The peace of those who have, so far as this world is concerned,

doffed their individual responsibilities and ambitions for ever; and thus entered, as it were, prematurely into rest.

'Rest of the spirit—for the body or the mind must be actively exercised to ensure that the restlessness of the spirit be not aroused. So much even an outsider like myself can perceive. . . .

'At the end of the meal the abbot struck a bell, and the monks at once rose to their feet. The reader closed his book and descended from the pulpit. A Latin grace was sung, and then, re-forming into a procession, two by two the monks filed out of the refectory in the direction of the chapel. Those who had served at table and the young monk who had read to us remained behind to eat their supper.

'Alaric Tremaine and I returned to the guest-house, and he asked me to join in a stroll and smoke a cigarette in the pleasant evening air. We talked a little, but not much. I think the trend of our talk is conveyed more or less by my reflections as recorded above. From the church close at hand came the sound of the monks intoning their office.

'At half-past nine the guest-house closed for the night.

'I wasn't called next morning, and when I passed the open door of Tremaine's room, which was next my own, I saw that it was empty.

'The church bells had been ringing all the time I was dressing, and for aught I knew, long before I was awake.

'It was about half-past seven when I made my way into the chapel, and Mass was being said at the high altar, and in several of the side chapels.

'I joined Alaric Tremaine, and we went to the refectory together for breakfast at eight; and on the way he told me that he had been up at half-past four. "The dawn wakes me." So he has evidently not lived in the East for so many years for nothing. He looked surprisingly fresh, and without ado profited by the hospitality of the convent, and finished the dish of eggs and bacon set before us; some foolishness made me loth to touch it, for only bread and tea was served to the monks during the meal, of which the manner was that of the preceding evening.

'After breakfast Tremaine went off with his brother for a walk and a talk, and I rather envied him. The young monk was beaming with a pride and delight in his distinguished elder that was, to an onlooker, rather touching. I could see that Alaric was moved by it in spite of his rough pretence of chaffing indifference.

'They went off together as happily as two schoolboy friends;

Brother David doing the honours of the place eagerly, and Alaric nodding and listening with no lack of interest on his strong sensitive face. The guest-master sought me out and talked of Father Petroc, and I began to think I was the only person in the world who knew not the meaning of brotherly love, and realised what a grudge an only child may owe its parents.

'All this time no instruction! for which the community deserves and receives my gratitude. The retreat is not yet—not until Father Petroc arrives.

'At present only peace, as I have said. The strange peace which, pervading the whole atmosphere of Fort Aloysius, sheds also a portion of its balm upon the worldling within its gates.

'How curiously far away seems London from the cold pure stillness of this refuge among the hills of the north! London and its absurdly overloaded dinner-tables, and the antics of the players in the vitiated air of the theatre which I found pleasant enough but a day or two ago. But a few hours since indeed it appeared to me almost essential that I should read the news of the day as fast as it could be telegraphed or printed; and now, behold, a change of surroundings, and the outside world seems to regard me not at all, and to be not at all regarded by me.

'Tremaine attended High Mass at ten, and as he seemed to expect me to go with him, I went. All the monks were present in their stalls, chanting in Latin during the whole ceremony.

'After Mass, the two brothers invited me so warmly to join them that I could not refuse; though I thought of the long, long time that must elapse before they could meet again, and hesitated to interrupt them.

"We've told each other all our news," said Brother David, frankly . . .

'When lunch, or as they prefer to call it, dinner, was over, we filed off with the monks and followed them as they moved chanting along the cloisters, till we reached a large bare apartment where a number of chairs were set in the middle of the floor in a horseshoe shape. The novices were excluded, but the abbot seated himself at the apex of the horseshoe, and the monks took their places in their appointed chairs; they only spoke when addressed by the abbot, or when he had signed to them his permission.

'I guessed that he was more indulgent than usual in consideration of the circumstances, from the number of questions addressed to Tremaine concerning his life in the East, and especially of the

earlier years, which he had passed almost exclusively among natives. He described his adventures with great vividness and picturesqueness and humour, and their delight and interest and wonder was once more—I can find no other word—touching in its spontaneity and simplicity. They were especially aghast over the “hardships” he had obviously undergone, taking not into account any glamour of adventure, or danger or freedom which made such hardships seem as nought in the recollection.

“Think of what these poor fellows eat and drink—of the beds they sleep on—the discipline—the dead monotony,” said Tremaine to me afterwards. “Good Lord! And to think my life in the jungle horrified them!”

‘But we agreed that the naïve expressions of surprise and enjoyment which, through Brother David and the guest-master, reached our ears, suggested that this “recreation” must have been exceptionally lively, and Tremaine said he had heard that this half-hour of ordered enjoyment is usually abhorred by its victims.

‘After Benediction, as a series of sermons for men is being preached by one of the monks, I stayed to listen, but Tremaine escaped; and when I went up to my little room I saw him once more wandering with his brother in the grounds, smoking his eternal pipe.

‘He is going to-morrow and I expect I shall miss him. His is a unique personality. Strong and energetic beyond the average, with a vitality I have never seen equalled. The intensity of enjoyment with which he talks, or listens to anything that interests him; the diversity of his interests; literature, nature, history, psychology, politics, sport, theology—nothing comes amiss to his omnivorous mind; he appears to me equally absorbed, whether he is engaged in reading, talking, saying his prayers, taking photographs, or eating his meals with an appetite I never saw excelled. The quality most striking about him is his abnormal power of concentration. I am minded to take our honeymoon trip to his residency at Banat, for the mere pleasure of pursuing this acquaintance, which has to-night, as we walked and smoked after supper, advanced across the border and touched friendship.

‘There is some quality in him of enthusiasm which has outlived all the chances and changes and doubtless the disappointments of his seven-and-thirty years. Yet he must have learnt early all that isolation and responsibility can teach. But dear old Bernard himself is not more simple at heart than this man, with all his experience and ripe wisdom.

‘I wish he were not going away to-morrow, but he said frankly that he couldn’t bear the parting from his wife any longer. He showed me her miniature on his dressing-table with all the pride of a lover. Yet they have been married ten years.

“That’s Kit,” he said, and did not attempt to hide his delight when I exclaimed with truth that I had never seen a more charming face.

‘It was that of a young girl, with bright wistful eyes, and curly dark hair, and a rather timid smile.

“It was taken just after we married, when she was one-and-twenty. But she hasn’t changed a bit,” he said simply; and something told me that in the faithful eyes of that large and loyal soul, she would never change . . .

‘Oh, my little love—why didn’t you choose a lover more worthy of you than a useless, loafing, aimless loungers in the ways of life? When I meet a man cast in the heroic mould of a fellow like Tremaine, do you think I can’t see the difference?—ay, and feel it bitterly. I look on at us both, as it were, from the outside—and compare us.

‘But you have chosen me, and I love you; and if I dared, I would comfort you by saying that your wish has never been nearer its fulfilment than now; for a chance word from this man’s mouth has moved me more than all the arguments. He has upon me an extraordinarily inspiring and vivifying effect, so that it is my *disillusions* which seem to vanish in his presence . . . but to-morrow when he is gone, I may be in another mood; I know myself. Don’t count on anything. . . . We have not touched on the subject of religion until to-night, when the semi-darkness and the growing attraction, which, I may frankly say, exists between us, induced an exchange of confidences.

‘I asked him, diffidently, whether he were happy about his brother; and he said, with emphasis and that decision which arises from a habit of clear thought and purpose:

“Absolutely. His faith is strong, and free from any manner of doubt.”

“One would say from his face that he had such freshness and vitality; such exuberance of spirits, and unbounded capacity for enjoyment.”

“Yes. That’s why he distrusts himself. He distrusts himself to a quite extraordinary extent. He believes his will-power to be infinitely weaker than his passions, and has therefore deliberately put himself into harness to be driven by a stronger will than his

own. He has thrown himself into this life with his characteristic ardour."

"His content is obvious."

"It's more than content. It's happiness," said Tremaine. "I never saw the old fellow so thoroughly happy."

"You could not have chosen such a life for yourself?"

He agreed heartily.

"It's not at all in my line."

"I only ventured on one more word, and indeed we had no more time, for the clock was chiming in readiness to strike the half-hour after nine which sends us all meekly to our respective rooms.

"Then do you think that a man, conscious of many human weaknesses and a weak will, of a mental capacity by no means above the average, and with no claim to the possession of any spiritual perception of his own, would be justified in submitting his judgment blindly to the guidance of those whose lives are purer, whose wills are stronger, and whose perceptions are clearer than his own; that he may accept their faith and be guided by it, even though he does not understand, nor even share that faith?"

He paused.

"I think," he said slowly, "that as a sick man, consulting a doctor, takes his advice as a rule, blindly; so such a man as you describe may accept the teaching of the combined wisdom of his betters, as likely to be superior to any theory he could evolve for himself. Our people, you know, think it as absurd for each individual to think out his religion for himself, as it would be for a layman to instruct a physician—or any other expert. The Church claims to be an expert on a certain subject, to put it baldly."

"And if one accepts the teaching of that Church—and just does the minimum she asks—is that sufficient?"

He turned on me with a curious light in his blue eyes.

"You won't find yourself doing that. It is everything—or nothing," he said.

"We bade each other good-night, and I came to my little room here, not to sleep, but to write to you, my darling. . . . How little of a man—what a poor moth you must think me—hovering, hovering, never settling. Or let us go back to the hermit's old simile, the chameleon reflecting, truly perhaps for the moment, the colour of his surroundings—"

(To be continued.)

WHERE THERE WAS PEACE IN THE BALKANS.

PODGORITZA, where not a man, woman, or child has had a thought beyond fighting of late, was a peaceful country town when I was there, a few years ago. It was the only town, indeed, in the whole Balkan region, where Mahomedans, Roman Catholics, and the Orthodox were on terms of real good-fellowship, where they could all meet together and talk, without any fear of a fight. Under the trees before the hotel where I was staying, Turkish officers and Montenegrin functionaries would sit side by side of an evening, drinking coffee together in the most friendly fashion; while Albanians walked up and down exchanging with them, on appropriate occasions, gravely courteous greetings. Even the Governor would be there sometimes, talking just as readily to Turks or Albanians as to Montenegrins. For, frontier town though it were, with aliens who were hungry as well as rapacious at its very door, there was all-round peace and good will in Podgoritza in those days, prosperity too. One had only to look at the faces of its people to know that all was going well with them, that the little factories they had started were thriving. Yet, until 1879, when the Great Powers made a present of the town to Montenegro, it was the veriest desolation of desolations: there was great poverty there, endless strife, fanaticism running riot, with weeping and wailing in its train.

'We are the only nation who know how to manage Albanians and Turks,' the Montenegrins are wont to say; and that this is no vain boast, Podgoritza, when I was there, was strong proof.

Not only was there at that time no animosity among the diverse races that dwelt in and around the town, but what rivalry there was was of an eminently friendly, wholesome kind. There were three municipal schools there, one for the Orthodox children, one for the Roman Catholic, and one for the Mahomedan; and each of the three school directors was striving heart and soul, according to his lights, to make his special school the model school for the whole district. The result was the Orthodox school was extremely good, and so was the Roman Catholic, while the Mahomedan would have been good had its director had a free hand. Unfortunately, tradition ordains that the Koran must have the lion's share of every boy's time; and reading, writing and arithmetic must be the 'remlings,'

a fact that handicaps seriously even the cleverest of the Mahomedan boys. The little Montenegrins answered almost every question I asked them, answered it without hesitation and intelligently, as a rule. Never before had I come across children quite so quick-witted as they were, so mentally alert; never before, children who had so many ideas in their little heads, or who cherished such lofty ambitions. Why, every boy among them seemed firmly convinced that he was destined to play a great rôle in the world, for the honour and glory of Montenegro. My only fear with regard to them was lest their exalted notions should stand in the way of their earning their daily bread.

The Turkish schoolboys were less alert than their Montenegrin comrades; but, judging by their faces, they were not one whit less intelligent—their teacher assured me, indeed, that they were much more intelligent. They, however, had none of their comrades' hopefulness, none of their soaring ambitions, their belief in themselves. On the contrary, there was a world of sadness in their great dark eyes, of depression in the solemn dignity of their bearing. Never a laugh was heard in their playground: even there they seemed to take life with quite unnatural seriousness, as if haunted by the thought that nothing but sorrow lay before them. Not so their sisters. A more cheery, light-hearted little company I never saw than that I found in the girls' school at Podgoritz. Some thirty little maidens, all smiles and dimples, were sitting in a semi-circle on the floor when I arrived. They were all barefoot, and they were all nursing tenderly their pretty little toes. Face to face with them, also on the floor, was an old priest who was expounding to them the whole duty of woman according to the Koran, the whole duty of woman, being, so far as I could make out, to render man happy. He might just as well have expounded it to the winds, however, for any heed these little butterflies paid to his teaching. They chuckled and laughed and cast coquettish glances around, *la joie de vivre* personified.

The old priest seemed depressed. 'The teaching of female children is weary, weary work,' he informed me, with a mournful sigh.

Even in the prison at Podgoritz, all-round peace and goodwill prevailed, I found, prisoners and jailers being evidently on the best of terms. The jailers demeaned themselves, indeed, as if their special work in life was to make the prisoners comfortable. I once told a Montenegrin state official that there was no punish-

ment, so far as I could see, in being sent to prison in his country, whereupon he looked quite shocked.

'No punishment!' he exclaimed, 'but think of the disgrace of being in prison. Is not that in itself enough punishment?'

If in those days the people of Podgoritz were more peaceful and easygoing than other Montenegrins, it was but right that they should be; for their lines were cast in more pleasant places than the lines of other Montenegrins.

The town is not on the barren Black Mountain, it must be remembered, but in the rich fertile Zeta Valley, where even the pomegranate will grow. Thus they have none of the hardships to contend against that render the lives of the mountain dwellers so sore a burden—no grim wolves prowl around their doors. They can count on a good harvest, as a rule; and even if the harvest fails them, they have factories to fall back upon. Besides, theirs is a well ordered, well cared for town, or so at least it was when I was there; for they had a Governor who not only reigned but ruled. He held the whole district, indeed, in the very hollow of his hand: he knew exactly what every man and woman there ought to do, and saw to it that, so far as in them lay, do it they did, going about among them as a patriarch of old, keeping them *volentes volentes* in the narrow path. And his people were much too proud of him to cavil at his high-handed ways; and he certainly was a Governor to be proud of. He was a notably stalwart handsome man in a land where almost every man is stalwart and handsome, straight and active as a boy, notwithstanding his seventy-five years. He had won his spurs as a warrior too; and that he was most kindly even those who liked him least were fain to admit.

Governor though he were, General too, and of princely birth, he lived in the most primitive fashion, without ever a thought for convention or etiquette. I had, as it chanced, a letter of introduction to him; and no sooner was it delivered, than his secretary came running in to tell me that his Excellency would receive me the following morning, at five o'clock.

'You might, however, come later, if you chose,' he remarked, noting, perhaps, the consternation I was certainly feeling. 'Any time between five o'clock and eight would do, or even between nine and twelve. Shall we say nine?' he added, hurriedly, in evident fear lest I should say twelve.

I promised to be at the Governor's house the next day by nine o'clock; but seemingly he had his doubts as to whether I could be

relied upon ; for, long before nine, he came to fetch me. His Excellency had finished his morning meal, and was waiting for me, he said. And there was real relief in his face when I prepared to start off with him at once.

We found the Governor in a great bare salon, in which furniture there was practically none beyond a few chairs, a table and a sofa. He greeted me most cordially. He was very glad to see me, he declared ; and he hoped to see me many times ; for there were many things he wished to ask me. ' Englishwomen are practical, and they have common sense,' he added meditatively.

At that moment a stately and very beautiful old lady entered the room. She was wearing a dress of some dark material, made in the quaint national fashion, with a richly embroidered little jacket ; and she had in her hand a silver salver, on which were four tiny cups of coffee. She was the Governor's wife, and she bade me welcome with a courtesy that was quite charming in its kindliness, its simple dignity. One of the cups she presented to me with great ceremony ; another she presented to her husband ; the third, to his secretary ; and the fourth, she took herself. The Governor then gave us to understand that the time for talking was come.

He was troubled in his mind, it seemed ; and all because of his daughters. He had sent two of them to the boarding-school which the Russian Tzaritsa Marie had established at Cettinje ; and he was by no means sure that they were being brought up there as they ought to be brought up.

' It is a very grand school,' he informed me, in the oddest Slav-French I ever heard, helped out by explanations in German from his secretary. ' They teach drawing there, and music, and singing, and dancing, and many things besides, but. . . ' He paused for a moment, and then added angrily : ' They don't teach cooking ; they won't teach cooking. That Russian directress actually declares that *les belles idées* are of more importance than dinners. She would never dream of allowing young girls to spend their time learning how to cook, she says, until their heads were already full of *les belles idées*. Does she think that they will be able to feed their husbands on *belles idées* ? That is what I should like to know. Now, I appeal to you, as a practical Englishwoman. Ought not my daughters to be taught at school how to cook ? '

I answered quite truthfully that I thought every one's daughters ought to be taught somewhere how to cook.

He chuckled with delight, and straightway set to work to prove

to me, that if Montenegrin girls were to be taught how to cook at all, they must be taught at school, as their mothers could not teach them at home.

'Their mothers do not know how to cook,' he explained. 'My wife does not know how to cook. There are not half a dozen women in Montenegro who do know how, and that is a real disaster for us all.' He spoke feelingly. 'I don't say that it is altogether their fault,' he continued, in a tone that showed plainly that he did think it was. 'I remember the day when they had no time for cooking, and nothing much to cook; when they were out early and late working on the land, their husbands being off soldiering. They fell into the way then of having bread, coffee and eggs for every meal; and they cannot now be made to see that anything more is needed. There is nothing to be done with them. I have talked to them until I am tired; but they have no understanding. With their daughters, now, it is different. They can be taught how to cook and they shall. I am so glad you think as I do. I knew you would.' He glanced around triumphantly.

His wife, who had been listening to him with a patient smile, ventured to remark that cooking was a little difficult in houses where there were no ovens—no fire-places, even. There were other remarks she would, I think, have liked to make, had not etiquette barred the way. A Montenegrin woman is at a great disadvantage in talking to her husband, it must be noted; for no matter what wild statements he may make, she is bound by law not to contradict him. Her solemn renunciation, so far as he is concerned, of her innate right to contradict is an integral part of the Montenegrin marriage ceremony. Every bride, before she can become a wife, must, standing before the altar, swear that, let her bridegroom say what he will, she will never, when he is her husband, gainsay him. This is, perhaps, why a Montenegrin marriage is such a very doleful ceremony. I was at one at Cetinje at which the bride sobbed aloud, the whole time, as if every friend she had ever had was just dead, and her heart was broken.

Although there was such profound peace at Podgoritza, when I was there, that even the Governor had nothing more serious to worry about than the inability of women-folk to cook, none the less there, as everywhere in Montenegro, war was being prepared for silently, ceaselessly, and with infinite care. Even then, not only men but schoolboys were robbing themselves of sleep, that they might have the time in which to furbish up their arms, and fit themselves

to fight skilfully for their country. Whenever they had a spare moment they betook themselves to the mountains to drill, thrilled with solemn joy at the thought of the great war which must, as they all believed, soon come. 'We cannot remain cooped up here, as we are,' almost every Montenegrin I came across declared. 'We must have more provinces or we shall starve.' And more provinces were not to be had without war. I found a monastery I chanced to visit packed with soldiers, and every monk there ready to transform himself into a soldier the day the great war began. The great war that was being prepared for, was, however, against the Austrians, not the Turks, against the hated Schwabs. 'The Balkans belong to the Balkaners, what right have the Schwabs to be here?' This was the cry I heard on every side. Even at Podgoritzza, when an Austrian appeared in the *allée*, angry glances were exchanged. 'Austria is the enemy now: we have nothing to fear from Turkey,' I was told, again and again. Yet curiously enough, at that very time, a Turkish force 5000 strong was stationed just across the frontier, some four or five miles beyond Podgoritzza; and, when sailing on the Scutari Lake, I could hear shots being fired on the mountains, Turks killing Montenegrins, Montenegrins killing Turks.

I went over to the Turkish encampment, one day, to pay a visit to the daughters of the officer in command there. And a miserable place it was, a startling contrast in every way to peaceful, thriving Podgoritzza. Many of the soldiers were in rags, and not a few of them looked half-starved, while they all seemed to be more or less angry. Evidently something or other had occurred to ruffle their tempers; for they were standing about in little groups talking in undertones, growling, grumbling, and exchanging fierce glances the while. There was not a touch among them of that calm silent dignity which, as a rule, marks even the pariah Turk and renders him impressive. The commandant himself was worried and anxious, that was easy to see; and, although he assured me that I was very welcome, I knew by the look in his eyes that I was not—that, if he could but have bade me drive straight across the frontier again, he would have offered up to Allah hearty thanks. That was impossible, however: as I was there, there by invitation, too, there I must stay for hours; so etiquette ordained. He therefore conducted me, with all possible speed, to his private dwelling, and left me there.

This dwelling, which outside was hardly better than a wooden shanty, was inside quite charming. The room into which I was

led was glowing with gorgeous colours. The walls were draped with silk, purple and rose of every shade, with a glimmer of gold to blend them. The couches, too, were covered with silk, and so were the windows; while on the floor were rugs so soft and thick that they deadened the sound of every tread. And the two Turkish girls who lived there were as charming as their room. They were both quite young, the elder being seventeen, perhaps, at most; and they were both very beautiful, very much alike, too, excepting that, whereas the hair of the one was quite black, that of the other was golden-brown. They were fairly tall, slender and very graceful; they had exquisitely cut features, delicate complexions, and quite glorious eyes, eyes at which no prudent father would ever willingly allow his son even to glance, unless he wished him to marry a Turk.

That my hostesses were glad to see me there could be no doubt. Why, they simply beamed with delight when I appeared. Little wonder either; for I was, it seemed, the first visitor they had had for months; the first foreigner they had seen for more than a year. And they loved visitors, and cherished a special *tendresse* for foreigners.

[] These girls were much better educated than most Turkish girls, I soon found. Learning the whole duty of woman had not been made the be-all and end-all of their studies; for they could speak French, they knew a little English, they could paint and sing. Nor was that all. Their father had evidently none of the horror most Turkish fathers feel at the thought of allowing their daughters to use their brains; for they were much more alert mentally than any of the other Turkish ladies whom I had met. They were the veriest Athenians, indeed, in their love of the new, their craving to know what was going on in the great world that seemed to be so far beyond their ken. And with the alertness of the Athenian they combined, curiously enough, the heedlessness of the Undine. Never did I come across girls who chattered and talked as they did; who spoke so simply and naturally of all they thought and felt, or who were so lovingly trustful, or so—irresponsible.

They were living in this encampment completely cut off from everyone, with not a creature excepting servants to speak to. For their mother was dead; and their father, who seemed to have no other wives, was too busy to have much time to give to them. And to make matters worse, they had nothing to do the whole day long; for needlework bored them; and although they loved reading, the books they had to read were few.

Their life was quite horridly dull, they declared, as we sat drinking coffee and eating sweetmeats. When I agreed with them, however, that it must be dull, they both laughed merrily. Dull though it might be, it was evidently well worth living. Besides, it was not going to be dull very long, the elder of the two assured me in a whisper. Then, as if struck by a sudden thought, off she rushed, taking her sister with her. When a moment later they returned, they were hooded and clothed from head to foot, the one in pale blue satin and the other in bright rose; while the one as the other had before her face a little black veil, that flew about in the most bewitching fashion.

They were in a flutter of excitement: their eyes seemed larger than ever, their colour more brilliant. They were going to take me for a little stroll they said; they had something to show me.

An old Turkish servant who was with them glanced at me doubtfully as they spoke. Evidently she did not approve of the expedition.

Heedless though they might be at home, these Turkish girls were keenly alive to what was decorous abroad; for, as we left the house, their whole demeanour changed: in the twinkling of an eye they became as grave and demure as nuns. They did not speak one word; they never even raised their eyes from the ground as they walked along at a funeral pace by my side. They led me away from the soldiers' quarters towards a little white tent, before which a tall handsome Turkish officer was standing, as if carved in stone. Although we passed straight before him, no salutations were exchanged; he never moved even a muscle, indeed never gave even a glance in our direction; nor did my companions give a glance in his. The elder of them took my hand, however, when we had left him well behind; and with the prettiest little gesture placed it over her heart.

'Feel how it beats,' she whispered. 'He is my *fiancé*. The marriage will be soon.'

She was all aglow with happiness, all aglow with love too; yet, as she explained to me, she had never heard the sound of this man's voice, he had never even touched her hand.

They chattered and talked more than ever, when we were safe indoors again; and when I wished to say good-bye tears came into their eyes. They had hoped that I should stay with them for a week at least, they said; and they appealed to their father, when he came in, to persuade me to stay.

This he refused to do, however, with many courteous apologies. If later I would pay his daughters a visit he would esteem it a high honour, he said ; but, for the time being. . . . Evidently his one wish was that I should stand not on the order of my going, but go at once. And a few minutes later I knew that he had good reasons for his wish.

To reach the frontier we must pass through the midst of the soldiers, who were still standing about in groups ; and no sooner did they see us than they raised an odd sort of growl, which I did not like at all—it made me think of wolves. They were evidently very angry indeed by this time ; and had it not been too manifestly absurd, I should have said that they were angry with me. As we drove past, they scanned me over in the strangest fashion, or so at least it seemed to me ; some of them with scornful indignation in their eyes, others with fierce bitter wrath. And all the while the very air was alive with what sounded like the Turkish for Englishwoman.

The Commandant became whiter even than before, I noticed, and more anxious. Never a sound passed his lips until the little river that marks the frontier was reached. Then he heaved a sigh of relief, such as in my life I had never heard. It was as if he had suddenly been freed from some burden almost too heavy to be borne.

It was not until later that the whys and wherefores of the fashion in which the Turkish soldiers demeaned themselves that day were made clear to me. Just before I arrived at the encampment the news had come, it seems, that the Sultan had yielded to England in the Sinai Peninsula question ; and that therefore there would be no war. And these soldiers had been led to believe that war was as sure as death, close at hand too ; and they were craving for war. For war is to them at all times as the breath of life ; and in war, at that time, lay, as they knew, their one chance of ever seeing the pay for which they had long been clamouring ; their one chance, therefore, of having quite enough to eat, quite enough wherewith to clothe themselves.

EDITH SELLERS.

A SIDELIGHT ON YOUNG TURKEY.

HUSNEYA was my first friend. She was a very charming person, small, fair, with silky light-brown hair parted in the middle; and her perfectly shaped face resembled a little Greek Aphrodite I once saw in a museum at Pisa. She was the wife of Ali Bey, the military governor of a far-off Asiatic province, and as her husband was a 'Young Turk' who hated ostentation and shams of any kind, she trusted to the natural beauties of her complexion, eschewing the rouge and powder affected by some of her countrywomen, and her slim hands were unadorned. The type of Turkish lady with whom European women travelling in Turkey usually become acquainted is either a daughter or wife of a rich Pasha, ordering her gowns from Paris, reading French novels and aping European fashions; or latterly, perhaps, one of the most advanced leaders of Feminism, such as Halide Hanum, who writes for the daily papers, and is a leading spirit in Turkish educational matters. Husneya was none of these. She was just a soldier's daughter and a soldier's wife. The luxury of a European governess had not been hers, and except for the companionship of an enlightened and intelligent husband she had had little education save that of travel and experience.

Husneya had been married at sixteen to Ali Bey, ten years her senior and then a captain in a cavalry regiment in Macedonia. Husneya lived with her mother and aunt in Constantinople, and there Ali, hiding in the ilex trees beside the 'sweet waters of Asia,' had obtained a clandestine glimpse of his future bride. Beside that cool creek of the Bosphorus, Husneya, after the Turkish fashion, had been used to wander on warm spring days with her young friends, abandoning in part the conventions of the town for the welcome freedom of the country, with unveiled face and hair only concealed by a soft gauze scarf. As the girls talked and laughed together Husneya passed close to Ali's hiding-place, and he loved what he saw and determined she should be his wife. The betrothal took place, arranged by the parents; but Ali did not see her again for a year, as his military duties made it impossible for the marriage to take place. During this time they were allowed to correspond; and so, before they had met, they had formed a sound basis for that mutual friendship which has followed twelve years of marriage.

Colonel Ali Bey was a 'Young Turk' who had played a prominent part in the Revolution of 1908. His experiences up to the Declara-

tion of the Constitution had been purely military and he had gained the reputation of being a strong and able man. ('Ali Bey is a small man,' said my thoughtful friend Major Rechid Bey, who introduced me by letter, 'but there is more strength of character in him than in many of us who are twice his size.') Young, honest and of an amazing energy, he was obsessed by the idea of regenerating Turkey, and was now in process of governing a province which shortly before had been devastated by one of those appalling massacres that, alas! have recurred so frequently in those parts of the Turkish Empire. The members of different races and creeds, each of them ignorant and fanatical, live together in strained tension till some untoward influence or impulse rouses the sleeping ferocity of the dominant race. Then, urged on by greed, and encouraged by religious fanaticism, they rise, slay and burn. The full tale of the terrors of the massacre cannot be told. To this province, its wounds still gaping, came Ali Bey and Husneya his wife, bringing with them the spirit of the reformer, the spirit of hope. The difficulties of the situation can hardly be imagined—on the one hand, the most extreme fanaticism of Islam outraged by the very idea of administering equal justice to Moslem and Giaour—on the other, the Christian population, too long oppressed to be capable of any confidence in a Turk, be he young or old. The Christians regarded his attempts with suspicion, the Moslems nicknamed him the 'Giaour Vali' and put every obstacle in his path. The new Governor found himself practically alone—his subordinates either new to their work, or else servants of the old régime, always alert in mischief-making—and it was only by controlling everything himself that he could get any measure of law and order carried out; but, half by persuasion, half by firmness, he gradually gained the confidence of the Christians, who regarded him as some queer freak, so little accustomed were they to such treatment. In this work of pacification Husneya helped him. It is an error to suppose that woman in the East is a nonentity; her influence reaches far beyond the walls of the harem, and for good or bad she may move the destinies of province or even empire. Not only by continually bringing before him cases of oppression which came to her ears and urging her husband to a greater pity, but by her own sympathy with all suffering, she won the hearts of rich and poor, Turk and 'Giaour.' Perhaps she sometimes shocked the old-fashioned Turkish 'hanums' by her up-to-date ideas from Salonica; but they soon forgave her, for the sake of the brightness she brought into their lives, the school she started for their daughters (itself a daring innovation in those parts), where the

girls learnt French and English, sewing and embroidery, and, better still, a sense of moral responsibility and self-respect. But the Christians adored her. 'There has never been one like her,' Eygul, my Christian handmaiden and interpreter, assured me. 'We all love her; she is quite different from some of the Turkish ladies we know, she speaks gently and not roughly to us, and we know that she is our friend.' She was a familiar figure on the Relief Committee, which met once a week, and showed a business capacity in deciding the market value of the work done by the survivors of the massacre. Best of all, she helped to spread around her a more liberal spirit, the spirit she had imbibed from Ali, in the early days of their marriage, and later from the wives of Ali's friends and fellow reformers; and she strove earnestly to break down that web of prejudice and ignorance by which the folk of that far-off Asiatic city were being choked.

Husneya and I were fast friends the first day we met. I had the good fortune to come with an introductory letter from Major Rechid Bey, Ali's intimate friend, who, Husneya afterwards cheerfully informed me, 'loved me with a friend's heart and not with a bad eye,' and so I had the advantage over the mere curious traveller, casually introduced by a consul or a missionary, who, though always hospitably received, would not have been met with the same delightful cordiality and absence of restraint that greeted me. 'Do not let your soul be squeezed,' Husneya said to me—a picturesque way of begging me to make myself at home—while Ali remarked in an encouraging way, 'One feels a little awkward the first day in a strange house, but one soon gets used to one's new surroundings.'

Though I could only converse with Husneya through the medium of an interpreter, who was either her husband, a fluent French scholar, or Eygul, the Christian girl, who talked a strange English learnt at school in Beyrout, we understood each other from the outset with a quickness born of a mutual trust. 'We are friends, we do not need to speak,' she told one who expressed surprise at the pleasure we derived from each other's company; and, in truth, the way of words is but one of many roads by which the human spirit can communicate with its fellows. How often has it not happened to one to talk and talk to a companion and friend, and at the end to feel that the gulf of misunderstanding had only been widened, not bridged? I hardly realised the lack of a common language; for is it not true, as the poet says, that 'Love is the one way to know or God or man,' and Husneya and I loved each other. Still, talk we did, sitting on the divan that ran round the room. Husneya had a 'salon' with chairs and sofas stiffly arranged to receive visitors,

with small tables laden with European nicknacks, picture postcards sent to Ali by friends abroad, and innumerable photographs of Ali and her sons ; but we never sat there, for who would choose to sit on a chair when the easy intimacy of the divan was available ? I tried to rid myself as much as I could of all preconceived notions and to meet her simply as one woman with another. We discussed many things *à deux*, or with some of her intimate friends who quickly became my friends too—Melek Hanum, pale and dark-haired, like a ' Waterhouse ' nymph, always accompanied by her thirteen-year-old daughter Nesle, a gay birdlike creature, rather precocious and very talkative, who, like so many of the youth of Turkey, was being educated by the French Catholics—Seniha, a young bride, more like one's old-fashioned ideas of a Turkish woman than the others, with huge ' gazelle ' eyes, who sang and played to us on the guitar—old Nejib, a witty matron of forty, the wife of one of Ali's corporals, who had followed him from Salonica. Chief of them all (and Husneya's best friend) was Rabah, the clever one of the circle of friends, whose wedding-day was approaching.

They generally arrived about ten o'clock, after the Vali had gone to the *konak* (government office), veiled in their black *tcharchaffs*, the loose cloak that conceals the form of the Turkish lady from head to ankle whenever she leaves the house, and they would settle themselves comfortably for the day with the sewing or embroidery they brought with them. Kainana (mother-in-law), Ali's handsome old Bosniak stepmother, prepared coffee ; and I, knowing the error of seeming to force conversation in the East, would take up my drawing or writing till the inevitable flow of questions began. Not till then had I realised the conversational value of the commonest English habits, which assumed the dimensions of adventure when I related them to my Turkish friends. I could keep my audience deeply interested while I described the behaviour of my acquaintances at home in a variety of circumstances, from catching a train to selecting a husband, and so interested were they that they came to regard them rather as long-lost friends. Or the conversation would turn to politics. They liked to hear of the aims of the suffragists and of women's education at home ; for they are all *féministes*, though of the evolutionary rather than the militant type, and they were very anxious for me to know that they were not the least *désenchantées*, insisting rather on the happiness of their lives, while keen for progress and better education, and all the liberty that they were confident time would bring them. They ridiculed the old-fashioned notions still prevalent among the more backward

inhabitants of this provincial city, some of whom, they told me, still considered an empty head to be not only the adornment but the duty of women. They were all enthusiastic admirers of the English and desired nothing so much as the advantages of an English education for their children, begging me to send them information on the subject, and, if the time ever came, to mother the children they should send to England. We discussed the relations of the sexes—the comradeship of English men and women—my own position as a young unmarried woman, and whether it was to be envied or deplored, opinion being about equally divided, some envying my freedom to go and come when and where I would, others looking upon me as a good wife wasted.

They all desired ardently to travel in Europe, and though I have met Turkish ladies lunching at a smart restaurant in London whose attire would lead one to suppose they were daughters of Paris or Vienna, the chief barrier in the way, in the minds of my friends, was the difficulty of finding a form of dress which should pass as European while still conforming to the customs of Turkey, *i.e.* to keep the hair and figure concealed. It is strange how strongly this conservatism is clung to by the Eastern woman—one Turkish lady who has been educated by European teachers and has spoken in public in Western cities, has told me of the struggle she had with herself before she could get accustomed to wearing a hat!

About midday a quick military step would be heard on the stairs, Ali Bey would tactfully go into the sitting-room on the opposite side of the landing, and while the ladies donned tcharchaff and veil, and departed to their homes, I would be sent by Husneya to entertain him. Ali and I discussed many things in the short intervals he spared from his work. We found we had much in common, we read the same philosophy, pondered over the same religious doubts, argued political problems, even laughed at the same jokes, and the midday meal was a cheerful one. Pilaf—kebab—dolmas with various sweetmeats, were served to us by the friendly Greek servants who joined freely in the conversation. According to Eastern custom, I as guest was given the seat of honour at the head of the table, with Ali on my right and Husneya on my left. I have many memories of talk and laughter at those cheerful meals. Husneya, to evoke one of my few Turkish phrases, would start talking about me in Turkish to her husband, and my question 'Ne seulyorsuniz, Husneya Hanum? (*What are you talking of?*)' was regarded as a brilliant conversational feat, and an excuse for the laughter that was

always on the verge of issuing from Husneya's lips. I loved her laugh, it had such an intoxicating, sympathetic ring, full of the happiness it called you to share. Old Kainana was always laughing too—we all laughed—and Husneya was glad because Ali ceased to be so preoccupied and silent and began to laugh too. But he allowed himself barely an hour, and then his work called him and he would bid us good-bye till the evening.

Sometimes, in obedience to Husneya's commands not to allow my soul to be squeezed, I would spend the afternoon alone, exploring the narrow streets, picking my way through pools of muddy water along the roughly cobbled streets that Ali boasted he would soon transform, where the camels lay huddled in picturesque splashes of rich brown, harmonising with the duller brown of the streets and the rich red of the tiled roofs of the little low shops and the bazaar that jutted into the street; blue-clad unveiled 'Yuruk' women stood by them, waiting for their lords, to start back again on their journey to fetch wood or grain from the mountains. Tall, fierce-looking Kurds, busy fat Greeks, Armenians from town and country, smart Turkish officers, all hurried past me, or chatted in groups, coffee-drinking and smoking; but no one ever troubled me or even looked at me, though doubtless that queer Eastern crowd made its own mental observations as I passed. Once I pursued and caught a wandering Dervish, the glowing hues of whose scarlet robes had attracted my eye; he had come all the way from Baghdad selling medicines of his own making, and when I bribed him to sit as my model in the Vali's garden, he smilingly protested 'Alas! to have come all the way from Baghdad, to be written by a Giaour.'

Sometimes in the bazaars I would take out my sketch-book to jot down a hasty note, but in a few minutes so vast a crowd would surround me that I could see little. Where they came from so suddenly was a mystery. The long covered-in streets of the bazaar would be practically empty save for one or two veiled women busy marketing, or a donkey bearing a load of faggots driven by a blue-zouaved Turk, but before I had sketched in more than a line or two the crowd seemed to rise from the very paving-stones at my feet and be swaying and seething around me; a very kind and orderly crowd it seemed to me, and yet, was it not the same that swept through the streets in an orgy of massacre on that fatal night a few months before? Another day I would hire one of the rough ponies that stood in the streets and ride out into the country, first splashing through the mud above my pony's knees, then out across the old

Roman bridge on to the rocky ground that borders the river, thick for miles and miles with masses of pink starry asphodels ; past many a burnt farm that told its own sad tale, the whole scene backed by a snow-capped range of mountains—turning, as the sun sank, to gallop back to the minarets and white walls of the city. Once home I would climb up to the flat roof, and looking down on a pale-mauve sea of roofs, with palm trees and minarets rising here and there, listen to the voices of the children playing below ; and as the purple shadows on the crimson mountain-tops turned to blue, and gradually faded into one greyness, the voice of the muezzin calling to evening prayer rose from the minaret, ‘There is no God but God, and Mohammed is His Prophet.’

Supper was much like the midday meal, only Ali was a little more tired and came back, perhaps, with a tale of difficulty for our solving. He had a hatred of petitions ; for, he said, he had no right to interfere with the law, his reverence for it being all the greater since it was an assimilated influence, as the convert to a religion is always its most ardent supporter. The Oriental mind, however, cannot understand this point of view. The power of conferring favours, they think, is the attribute of the great, and Ali was always besieged with petitions. He told Husneya most of his troubles, and though she had not much knowledge of affairs she had a sound common-sense that often seized upon the flaws in her husband’s judgment, and helped him to a juster view. Once, at Husneya’s request, Ali told me of a secret he had refused to share with her. ‘It was our first quarrel, Mademoiselle, in the early days before the Revolution,’ he began. ‘It was the only time I ever had a secret from my wife.’ In those days, he told me, he and his comrades were planning the overthrow of ‘the Despotism’ and were bound in an organisation, the members of which were sworn to absolute secrecy. Spies swarmed everywhere, and though, when the Revolution came, it was called a bloodless one, innumerable lives were given in the effort to bring it about. Night after night they met and planned, always varying the meeting-place, and night after night Husneya, barely two years married, waited in vain for her husband, who, returning at daybreak, could give no explanation of his absence. Poor Husneya ! She was only seventeen, and how could she know that she too was serving the sacred cause ? She thought Ali had tired of her and was intriguing with another woman ; but she had the heart of a lion, and the anxious husband, worn out with military duties by day and revolutionary plottings at night, would be met

on his return home with storms of abuse from the now infuriated girl. She fought him gallantly—arguing, pleading, storming—until one evening the climax came, when, as Ali was leaving the house still rigidly silent as to his destination, she swore to follow him into the streets, unveiled and without her *tcharchaff*, and proceeded to carry out her threat, the immodesty of which can only find a parallel in that of an Englishwoman who proposed to walk down Piccadilly in her nightdress. Ali, horrified, pushed her rudely back, locked the door in her face, and muttered to himself, as he strode away, that he would see her dead—her, and his mother and his children, if need be—sooner than break his oath. At last came a day when it was decided that women should share the secret and help (as they most nobly did afterwards) in the revolutionary movement, a wise decision, for women by religion and custom were safer from espionage and so could be safely entrusted with messages. Ali went home that night light of heart, and, taking Husneya in his arms, told her all, that he and his comrades were working to destroy the Despotism and build up a nation. ‘And now, Mademoiselle,’ he finished, ‘do you think she was pleased, my wife? Not at all; she pushed me away and burst into tears, declaring she had ten thousand times rather it had been another woman, for then my life would have been safe. *O les femmes!*’ But since then Husneya has learnt to think differently and be proud of her husband’s efforts.

Our evenings after Ali had left again for his office (for he worked till past midnight), Husneya and I often spent alone, exchanging Turkish and French phrases; and with the help of Eygul she would talk to me of her two boys, aged respectively ten and seven, whom she had left in charge of their aunt to finish their education with the ‘French Fathers’ at Constantinople. It was more by her silence than by her words that I guessed how much she missed them and with what a keen excitement she looked forward to the summer holidays that would bring them to her again. She would talk of Turkey and all that Ali hoped and feared, and how her sons might serve their country; soldiers, she supposed they would be, like their father. Sometimes friends came in after supper, and danced, and sang, and acted blind minstrels and dressed up in Ali’s uniform, all led by Rabah. ‘I don’t, of course, know Rabah,’ Ali said, ‘but, from what I hear of her, with education she would be more than equal to any European woman.’ Rabah had refused several offers of marriage, and now at last, after inspecting the suitor from a window, and finding his appearance satisfactory, she

had consented. For weeks before, the harem was filled with sewing, laces, and ribbons, and the wedding-day was specially hurried on to ensure my presence. When the day came I accompanied Husneya to the new house in which Rabah was to begin her married life. It was like most Turkish houses, built round a courtyard, with a door into the street, and a staircase leading up to a long corridor on the first floor, out of which opened three rooms. Before the other guests arrived, I lunched with Husneya and her friends, and the bride, dressed in a gown of rich white brocade. The middle room was set apart for the ceremony and in it a throne had been erected, covered with rich carpets on which, as the guests began to arrive, Rabah took her seat. The reception was held in the wide corridor, which was soon crammed with people, of course only women. One was chiefly impressed by the complete absence of any uniformity of dress; Husneya reigning like a queen over the ceremonies, was gorgeous in a European gown of white lace ordered from Beyrout, but while some of the ladies followed her example in varying degree, others wore the long flannel dressing-gowns which have taken the place of Turkish costume in the harem. A band of musicians, hidden behind a sheet, kept up their ceaseless din throughout the day, while sweets and coffee were handed round at intervals. The first break in the already rather trying monotony of the day was the arrival of the bride's brother and guardian, Assim Bey, a fat little man who stood *in loco parentis*. Though, on the occasion of a wedding, etiquette is admittedly lax, there was a flutter of excitement among the crowd of ladies at the first appearance of a man, and they all made a hurried movement to cover themselves, those who had them throwing light veils over their heads, my blue chiffon scarf serving to hide the blushes of three ladies who had omitted to provide for this emergency. Assim Bey came up the stairs, kissed the bride, tied a girdle loosely round her waist, hurled a handful of coins into the crowd of guests, and left as hastily as he came. Rabah sat down again, this time remaining with us in the corridor, and the weary waiting began again. It is generally *de rigueur* for the bride to remain silent with eyes downcast, but Rabah was not conventional and talked to her friends from time to time. Fresh guests arrived—portly Greek ladies dressed in the height of fashion, and the wives of one or two Armenian merchants—and the time passed slowly. Suddenly there was a loud knocking at the door below. The bride, gathering up her skirts, descended the stairs alone, opened the door to her future husband and led him upstairs;

he was a nice-looking well-brushed young man of about twenty-eight, and seemed quite overwhelmed with shyness while Rabah, who throughout maintained her air of rather amused superiority, steered him safely past the crowd of critical gazers into the throne-room, where they were to sit until the bridegroom could succeed in making the bride speak. All he said, we afterwards heard, was 'Lord! how awful is this ceremony!' in which sentiment Rabah, I suppose, hurriedly agreed; for in two minutes the bridegroom emerged and fled through the company, forgetting, in his terror, to throw the necessary handful of silver among them, and was half-way down the stairs before he could be brought back, more scarlet than ever, to perform this duty. After his departure, first to the mosque, then to a feast with his friends, we all trooped into the throne-room, where the bride, sitting on her throne, received our congratulations. These given, most of the guests left, only a few intimate friends, myself among them, remaining behind. It was now nearly seven. If the waiting had seemed long to me, what must have been the feelings of the bride, who had sat, stiffly upright in her chair, from noon till dusk, the observed of every eye! Supper was a welcome break; and after it, according to Scriptural precedent, while the bridegroom tarried we all slumbered and slept. One felt the full force and meaning of the Parable—the expectant waiting, the uncertainty, for at such an hour as we knew not the bridegroom was to come. The waiting was becoming well-nigh unendurable, one guest was crying with toothache, the bride (whose dress was far too tightly cut to be comfortable to one unused to Western fashions) was feeling a little sick, when at last, after several false alarms, about ten o'clock there was a rumour, 'Behold, the bridegroom cometh!' and a rush to the window. Yes, down the street was coming a procession of dark figures, dimly lit by one lantern. The bridegroom now bade his friends good-bye at the street door, and came upstairs alone, his footsteps resounding through the dark and now silent house. He crossed the landing, opened the door, and was in the presence of his bride. Through a crack in the door we watched her rise and greet him, then stand gravely looking down on her husband as he went through the necessary forms of prayer on the rug at her feet, first standing, then kneeling, then prostrating himself, this smart frock-coated gentleman. After he had drunk a cup of coffee he offered his arm to his bride, led her to the throne, and they both sat down. Rabah appeared to be chatting away gaily when I took my last peep, as free from embarrassment as though she were

a European hostess entertaining a young man-about-town; but I noticed that the bridegroom had not altogether lost his shyness, and from time to time feverishly mopped his perspiring brow.

Soon my araba (carriage) rumbled up to the door, and as I bade good-bye to Husneya—for I was spending the night with other friends—out rushed the bride to join in the farewells. This shocked even Husneya and she thrust her back to the astonished bridegroom.

A week later I was told that Rabah was very deeply in love. For love in Moslem countries comes after marriage, and it cannot come before. 'It is like this,' Rabah said to me when I next met her. 'Before he comes we may be afraid; but when we see him, we say to ourselves "He is good," and we love each other, and all goes well.' Certainly most of my friends were obviously happily married, and when all is said and done, if a woman has never seen more than one man, why should she not consider him a fairy prince, and, like Miranda, 'have no ambition to see a goodlier man'?

One hot spring day in the beginning of March, about three weeks after Rabah's wedding, we all drove out of the town to the vineyards, where irises and buttercups were bursting into flower, and my Turkish friends divested themselves joyfully of tcharchaffs and veils and gave themselves up to enjoying the freedom of the country. Under the cherry-trees in full blossom we shared a merry meal, each helping herself from the common dish in the middle. Larks were singing and the sky was blue and the whole air was full of the spring promise. But there was a touch of autumnal sadness in our hearts, for I was to leave the town the following day; and though we talked gaily of our next meeting, experience had taught me that such plans are apt to fail, the world and its circumstances conspiring to thwart them. 'Why do you go at all?' they said, 'stay the summer with us, and we will all come and live in the vineyards together.' Why indeed, my friends, why, 'when I have but arrived at the city, do I feel the irresistible call to depart?' It is the call of the Unknown, the feeling that, 'however sweet these laid-up stores, however convenient the dwelling-place, we must not remain here.' Good-bye, Husneya, Rabah, Melek, Moussafer, all you, my friends, you have been very dear to me! 'Do not forget us!' No, I promise, I shall never forget you, for 'I take my lovers on the road with me, for all that I leave them behind me,' and know 'the universe itself as a road for travelling souls.' *Allah ismarladik!*

R. U. HOWELL.

THE FATE OF AN OLD MASTER:

A COUNCIL SCHOOL IDYL.

I.

OF all the masters at Chignett Street School Mr. Salter was the oldest, the least successful, and the most unpopular. No one seemed to know exactly how long he had taught there, but none of the estimates were under twenty-five years. And now, among a young, vigorous staff, he seemed a kind of antediluvian survival, a man with whom his colleagues were as much out of touch and out of sympathy as he was with the boys.

It had not always been so. Thirty years before—for the highest estimate was less than the truth—he had come to the school a smart, strong young fellow with a London B.A. and a fair experience already. Life looked bright enough then, and he had not begun to repent that he had chosen schoolmastering as his profession.

Yet even in those early days there were signs, for seeing eyes, of what was to come. He was always a little rough and ill-groomed in appearance, and his way of speaking was apt to be short and brusque. If anything went wrong in the class, he soon grew fidgety and impatient, and his discipline was never anything to boast of. Then his interest in education was quite perfunctory, and the human boy, as such, had no attraction for him.

As time went by, his temper grew no sweeter, and the routine of school work that had been merely monotonous became almost intolerable. Outside the school walls life dealt with him not too gently, and in his home he found no balm for the worries of school. His one solace, his great amusement, was the pencil. Not that he had ever distinguished himself during his training in any of the educational varieties of art. 'Freehand,' 'Model,' and all the rest, he had practised and taught them with fair success and perfect indifference. But for thumb-nail sketches, for hasty impressions, for grotesque caricatures, often ill-drawn but always full of life and 'go,' he had a talent not far removed from genius. Mr. Home, one of the former Chignett Street headmasters, had been delighted with some of these sketches and had urged him to try to make a little

money by them. Fired with a new hope Mr. Salter had made several attempts, but in his ignorance of the market for such work he sent to the wrong places, and a few rebuffs quenched his ambitions and left him several degrees more soured than before. Still, those were what he afterwards came to look back upon as his halcyon days, for the knowledge that the headmaster appreciated his talent was a wonderful stimulus and consolation. Mr. Home, of course, was quite aware of his assistant's shortcomings as a teacher, but he went far out of his way to help him and cover his failings. It was when the kindly, easy-going headmaster was transferred to another school that Mr. Salter's evil days began. Mr. Worth, his successor, was a man of a very different type—keen, firm, energetic, with a fixed determination to work up Chignett Street to the plane of the Scholarship school. At the same time, he was neither unjust nor unkind, and when he saw how the land lay, he tried hard by friendly advice and persuasion to effect an improvement. Unfortunately, Mr. Salter met every such attempt by references to what Mr. Home used to wish, and say, and do, and when the new master was at last goaded into reminding him that a change of men often involved other changes too, the assistant resented the remark as an implied censure on his former chief. Changes were made in the staff, and the new masters were young men fresh from college. Gradually Mr. Salter drifted down to the lowest standards, where Mr. Worth thought he could do least harm. Then Mr. Westondale, the Government Inspector, after many hints and at least one warning, felt constrained to mention Mr. Salter's class as the exception to the otherwise excellent progress being made at Chignett Street. And now another visit was nearly due, and there had been no improvement. Worse still, Mr. Westondale had retired, and a new Inspector had taken his place, a young man with all the newest ideas buzzing in his bonnet. A second bad report would mean either Mr. Salter's removal to another school or—more probably—his being placed on the list of supply teachers. The headmaster was troubled in mind and heart. The one told him that the bad report would be an excellent thing for the school in general and for Standard II. in particular. The other asked him what chance such a man as Mr. Salter would have, at his age, under new and more difficult conditions. It reminded him, too, that the unfortunate master was rapidly approaching the age for compulsory retirement. On the whole, he looked forward with fear rather than with hope to the new Inspector's appearance.

II.

Among the boys who had the doubtful advantage of learning arithmetic from Mr. Salter was one named Merridew. He was a thin slip of a lad who came from a good home and was always clean and neatly dressed. His eyes, if anything a little too bright, and his fair skin, that flushed or paled at a smile or a frown, gave him an air of delicacy. As a small child, indeed, he had spent a long time in the hospital, and as a consequence he had come to school very late and had many arrears to overtake. But in most subjects he was very quick, and as he was nearly nine, Mr. Worth put him into Standard III. at once, sending him down to Standard II. for arithmetic, at which he seemed curiously dull.

One morning, about a week before the expected visit of the Inspector, an unfortunate incident occurred during this lesson. Mr. Salter had been kept awake most of the night by a fit of neuralgia and was unusually irritable even for him. The boys, of course, divined at once, by that mysterious sixth sense of the schoolroom, that something was amiss, and were as noisy and restless and inattentive as a Second Standard can be. Before the lesson was half over, four boys were standing out, two were in tears from raps on the knuckles, and the punishment book and cane had been sent for.

It was Merridew who was the messenger of doom. As he came back with the book and the squat little stick, there was a faint titter from one corner. Merridew put the book on the table and before laying the cane beside it made a little mock-threatening gesture with it towards the corner. Unluckily Mr. Salter, who was pacing up and down the room, saw the gesture and the smile that accompanied it.

'You, too,' he growled, as the boy turned into his corner seat, and, pouncing on him, administered a smart box on the ear. Merridew was stooping, and the unexpected blow toppled him over. He fell, and caught the side of his face against the edge of the desk. As he got up, crying, the blood was running from an ugly graze. Just at that moment the door opened and Mr. Worth came in.

Instantly the anger passed from Mr. Salter's face and dismay showed instead. It was not the first or the second time that the question of irregular punishment had arisen in connexion with Standard II., and in his precarious position the unfortunate teacher felt that he had probably sealed his own fate.

As it happened, Mr. Worth had not noticed the expression of Mr. Salter's face, but Merridew's quick eyes had seen.

'Why, what's the matter?' the headmaster asked, going up to the lad. 'How ever did you manage that?'

'I slipped down, sir, as I was going to my place, and hit against there,' answered Merridew in a very low voice, pointing to the desk.

'You had better go downstairs and wash your face,' said Mr. Worth. 'You haven't been making a butter-slide, have you?'

At this sally there was, of course, 'laughter in Court,' for human nature is very much the same in the boy and in the man.

III.

That afternoon, in the playground, Mr. Salter found an opportunity of speaking to Merridew. The boy looked rather frightened when his master came up to him, but the expression of his face soon changed.

'I didn't mean to hit you so hard, Merridew,' said Mr. Salter. 'I am sorry about your face. Does it hurt you still?'

The boy looked up with a friendly smile.

'Oh no, sir, not now. I can hardly feel it at all.'

'That's a good thing,' said the teacher, and then there was an awkward little pause. Mr. Salter had something else to say, but he seemed to find some difficulty in saying it.

'Look here, Merridew,' he said at last, 'you seem to find those sums very hard. If you come in to me at half-past four I'll try to show you how to do them.'

'Thank you, sir,' said the boy, looking a little doubtful, 'I'll come.'

He kept his word, and together they tackled a very simple little problem which involved nothing more serious than a long-division **sum**.

'A man has a bag containing 350 nuts. He puts 40 into his own pocket for himself. The rest he divides equally among his six children. How many did each get and how many were left in the bag?'

'Now, look here,' said the teacher, taking a piece of chalk and drawing a comic figure on the blackboard, 'there's the man with the nuts. Did you ever see anyone like him?'

'Oh, sir!' exclaimed the lad, in wonder and admiration, as,

with a few deft touches, a capital likeness of Mr. Salter himself appeared on the board.

'And here,' went on the teacher, enjoying the boy's enjoyment, 'are the six children.'

'Oh, that's Golden,' cried the boy, 'it's 'im to a T. And that's Dick Wright and that's Porter. Oh, sir, how do you do it? That's Waylett—it's just as if he were speaking. 'Oo's that? I don't know him—yes, I do—is it me, sir? Do I look like that?'

And, somehow or other, the sum was done in no time.

IV.

Merridew was not a reticent lad, and before the next day was over every boy in Standard II. knew that the pavement artist in coloured chalks outside the park railings wasn't 'in it' with Mr. Salter. Every time he went to the blackboard all eyes were fixed on him with strained attention, and he felt, without in the least understanding, a new note of respect in the way the boys answered him. At first he thought it was fancy, but when he found that the improvement lasted over the week-end, he was fairly puzzled.

On Tuesday morning the Arithmetic class were confronted with a terrible problem—'How many pairs of boots at 7s. 6d. per pair can be bought for 47l. 12s. 6d?'. One budding wrangler, by the simple process of multiplying the two sums—not quite accurately—had announced as the answer '335 pairs,' while another by an equally simple division reduced the number to six pairs. Gloom appeared on many faces and the temperature began to rise. Then Merridew held up his hand with a timid but appealing smile on his face.

'Yes, Merridew, what is it?' asked the teacher.

'Please, sir,' stammered the boy, flushing very red, 'will you draw something on the board about boots? We could do it then.'

Just now Merridew was a favourite, and his faith in the drawing-cure pleased Mr. Salter. So did a little buzz of 'Do, sir,' 'Oh please, sir,' that came faint but distinct from many forms.

'Very well,' he said, 'it's all nonsense; you ought to be able to work it in your heads, but this once I'll do what you want.'

And taking a piece of chalk, he walked to the blackboard and drew a shop-front, with rows of boots—great heavy clogs, elegant pointed toes, ladies' boots with high heels, and tiny children's shoes. In the middle was an enormous pair of Wellingtons with a label

attached—'Our Special Line—7s. 6d.' At the door stood a man with a bag in one hand, and in the other a huge purse on which were the figures 47l. 12s. 6d. Looking on, were three boys—figures only, without heads.

'Now,' said Mr. Salter, 'the first three boys to get the right answer shall have their faces put on the board.'

Instantly the whole class fell to work with furious concentration.

'Is that your usual method of teaching arithmetic, Mr. Salter?' said a strange voice, and the astonished teacher turned round to see a tall, brisk man with the official stamp upon him, quite unmistakably. It was evidently the new Inspector, a day or two before his time.

'If the idea's right it couldn't be better done,' Mr. Turton went on, without noticing the teacher's confusion. 'It's certainly very up-to-date. Now I'll just ask the boys a question or two.'

Almost all the questions had to do with the boot-shop, and the boys, interested and excited, showed at their very best.

'Now I'll wait to see the first face put on,' said Mr. Turton. In two or three minutes a boy in the front row held up his hand and gave the correct answer. He had a fat face with a great shock of black hair.

Mr. Salter looked to the Inspector.

'Yes, please,' said Mr. Turton.

It was an easy likeness to catch, and half a dozen strokes did it. The Inspector led the shout of laughter.

'Good morning, Mr. Salter,' he said. 'I've enjoyed myself immensely. You certainly have the courage of your opinions.'

Mr. Salter pondered long over this little speech, and the more he pondered the less he liked it.

In due course, the printed report of His Majesty's Inspector reached the school. It was, on the whole, a satisfactory document. After praising the general tone and efficiency of the work, it went on: 'I have great pleasure in calling special attention to the excellence of the work in the lower standards. Mr. Salter, in particular, shows by his strikingly clever and original use of graphic methods in teaching arithmetic that he is fully abreast of the most recent ideas in pedagogics. The brightness and intelligence of the boys in Standard II. do him the greatest credit.'

'Talk about miracles!' exclaimed Mr. Worth, when he read this astonishing report. 'After that, I'll believe anything.'

B. PAUL NEUMAN.

OLD DAYS IN WEIMAR.

It has been said somewhere by a German writer that when one reaches middle age life is but a graveyard of past memories.

Now although that is, alas! to a great extent true, I do not like visiting tombs. My friends are not there; they themselves, the kindliness, the goodness, the nobility, the great deeds or the small services live on and rivet an endless chain of sweet remembrances. Maeterlinck's beautiful idea in 'The Blue Bird' surely appeals to us more strongly, and whenever we think of our so-called 'lost' friends truly do they live again around us, vivid and fresh.

To revive a few of the old childish memories of my beloved Weimar home, where we met with so much kindliness and made such enduring friendships, and especially to recall my remembrances of the old Goethe-house, where we spent such happy years, is the object of the following pages.

In 1849 my mother, Jane Atkins, then quite a young girl, went to Weimar for a year, taking with her, among other introductions, one to Graefin Ulrike von Pogwisch, sister of Ottilie, Goethe's daughter-in-law. This was the foundation of a life-long friendship. She showed great kindness to my mother, who was in constant correspondence with her until her death, and although, alas! all the letters have vanished, I well remember them coming, with their big Thurn and Taxis stamps on them. There were always loving messages for the children, and my earliest attempts at German writing were small letters to 'Tante Ulla.' She became in her later years Lady Prioress of a Protestant Cloister for high-born ladies in Schleswig-Holstein, a delightful home, where my mother visited her in 1875.

In 1861 my mother went with her husband, John Phillips, for a short visit of two or three weeks to Weimar to see her old friends, and took me with them. Being very small, I cannot recall anything very definite, except the exquisite delight of having breakfast out of doors under the orange trees at Frau

Charlotte von Stein's old house, where my mother had stayed as a girl, and which was then occupied by Fräulein Marie Schwabe, a most gifted and delightful woman.

From that time dates also my acquaintance and friendship with the well-known writer, Helene Boehlau, and her family. My mother dressed a doll like an English baby for her, and I was presented by Frau Therese Boehlau with a German *Wickelkind*, beloved of my heart and treasured for many years.

It was then that I first met Graefin Ulrike von Pogwisch and her nephews, Walther and Wolfgang von Goethe, then living with her in Weimar. There is a legend still current in Weimar that I, who was nicknamed 'Birdie,' was requested to sing to Tante Ulla. But the imp of perversity seized me, and instead of 'Twinkle, twinkle, little star,' or some such proper performance, I insisted on dancing round and singing the old nigger song, 'Hoop de dooden do,' to the huge delight of Baron Walther and the rest of the company. I cannot tell whether my mother had met him before, but at any rate the friendship then was firmly cemented and not long after he became godfather to my youngest brother, who was named after him.

In 1871 my mother, left a widow with four boys and myself, was persuaded by her old friends in Weimar to go and settle there for a time, and as soon as peace was declared between France and Germany we did so and found ourselves in the midst of a strenuous and most interesting literary and artistic life.

Liszt was living there, his long gaunt form in Abbé's dress and his striking and intellectual face to be seen daily in the street. I only came once into personal contact with him. It was soon after our arrival, when we were living in Professor Friedrich Martersteig's house, that a strange lady called, having heard me sing through the window, and asked if I would join a chorus to perform two pieces of Liszt's on his birthday in the Roman Catholic Church. The choruses we practised were 'O Salutaris Hostia' and 'Ave Maris Stella.' But when the day came, either we had not practised sufficiently or the good lady waxed nervous and lost her head. The performance was execrable and the lady in tears. But the Abbé came up and with his inimitable graciousness thanked us for the compliment and said that if we liked he would conduct it himself the following Sunday. Our spirits rose, we had a good practice at his house, and next Sunday all went like a marriage bell.

He then invited the whole crowd to his weekly matinée. There were several performers, Theodor Winkler, an excellent flautist, and others whose names I forget; but what I have not forgotten was the heavenly music under the Abbé's long fingers as he sat and dreamed over the notes, the lovely air of the 'Salutaris Hostia' wandering through exquisite variations. In an ecstasy of delight I listened entranced, when a whisper came from Miss Betham Edwards: 'I have left my fan at your house,' and my mother ever ready to help: 'Oh, Mariquita will fetch it for you,' and my dream was shattered and my ecstasy fallen to earth. Never before or since I believe have I run so fast as I did to fetch that fan, but still I lost much of the music, a loss over which I grieve to this day, for I never went there again!

Of all the crowd there, my mother and I were the only ones he invited to come again, and I shall never forget the sweetness of his voice and the gracious courtesy of his manner. I was then taking music-lessons of Herr Gottschalg, a pupil of his, and for long after I continued to receive messages through him from the Abbé to ask why the English ladies did not come again. In these days it seems strange that anyone should put what appears to be a slight on such a great man, but there were, in my mother's eyes, two excellent reasons for our keeping away. His matinées were held every Sunday at 11 A.M., the hour of our English service, then held in the great hall of the Buerger-schule, and as I played the harmonium, led the singing, chose the hymns, found dear old absent-minded Dr. Wilson's places in his books, and generally conducted the business part of the service, I could not very well be spared.

The other reason was that Frau Ottilie von Goethe was very much against my being introduced to that circle, and perhaps it was not a very good one for an enthusiastic *schwaermerischer Backfisch* like myself. I certainly might have ranked with his adorers, who made themselves often very ridiculous in the little town. I once travelled in the same train with the Abbé, when there were thirty ladies to see him off at the station, each one with a bouquet!

Frau Ottilie von Goethe had returned to Weimar in the previous year and was then living with her two sons in the upper storey of the Goethe-house, in the same suite which she and her husband occupied after their marriage in 1817.

Ottilie was very small, not such a pretty old lady as her

sister Ulrike, but very intellectual-looking, with bright eyes, alert and vivacious. I think she loved having us children about her, and she certainly had a great affection for my mother. I have vague recollections of being very often in the house, and whenever anyone of note came to her open evenings, a few lines from her would come round to ask us to go in. I was greatly favoured, being the only young person I ever found there. Unfortunately my knowledge of German at that time was very slender, but I sat silent, trying to take in as much as possible of the wonderful conversations. I was much impressed by meeting Hermann Grimm one evening with his wife, a daughter of Bettina von Arnim. The Grand Duke, Carl Alexander, used to come in often, but I was rather frightened of him when I had to pour out his tea. We learnt to know him well enough later and to discover how kind and genial and sympathetic he was. Another intimate friend was Allwine Fromann, a clever and delightful old lady, who had been reader to the Empress Augusta for forty years.

The receptions were of the simplest character. Frau Ottilie held open house every evening, and always sat in the same chair behind a large round table at which her guests assembled and were regaled with tea and cakes. The conversation never flagged, for, added to the fact that they were mostly clever and intellectual people who were to be met there, Frau Ottilie had the great gift of bringing out the best conversational powers of her guests. She possessed an autograph album with a page and a motto for every day in the year. In this were, of course, a great number of well-known names, and I remember seeing a small musical sketch of Mendelssohn's in it. I have often heard Baron Walther speak of Fanny Mendelssohn and looked with reverence on the chair in which he said she generally sat when there. He also told me that she composed many of the 'Lieder ohne Worte,' notably the first, a favourite and very beautiful one. Another name often on his lips was that of Mme. Schumann, but always as 'Clara Wieck.'

One day he told me the following story. He was at a musical reception at which a certain great singer had been asked to sing a song by a young unknown composer. But when the evening came the singer refused, saying that the song was not worth hearing. However, when it was discovered that the music, tied round with a peculiar knot, had never been opened,

the host insisted on its being sung. It was the 'Erlkoenig'! An immense sensation followed, the audience were enthusiastic, the applause vociferous, and from that night onward the name of Schubert was no longer unknown.

One of the greatest losses which befell the family was that of Goethe's charming and gifted grand-daughter at the early age of seventeen. She was always mentioned with a tender reverence by her brothers as 'our sister Alma' and often a quick look up at the large picture of her sweet face crowned with roses which hung over the place where their mother sat. Frau Ottilie took a great interest in our small doings, and I have a charming letter of hers inviting my three little brothers to tea with a small godson and asking them to bring some 'toys (soldiers, &c.), or books, because I am not sure that I have much what would amuse them.' Her sons also, I think, must have enjoyed the young people running in and out, bringing innocent sunshine into their otherwise colourless lives. They were dreadfully *menschenscheu* and withdrew themselves, after their mother's death in 1872, entirely from society. It was not from want of asking. My mother and their staunch and faithful friend Frau Charlotte Hardtmuth, as well as others, endeavoured to induce them to forsake their hermit-like existence, but it was useless. They were very much liked and were both interesting and charming clever men, but the shadow of their titanic grandfather seemed to have oppressed them all their lives and they never were able to shake it off.

To us they were goodness itself; they never forgot our birthdays, and I have a vivid recollection of a large bouquet of lovely flowers which Baron Walther brought me on one of mine. The scene is very clear to me. The exquisite flowers on the piano, he sitting behind listening, while I in gratitude sang to him 'Blind Nydia's Song,' at that time a great favourite, the refrain of which ran: 'Bring more flowers'; which rather illustrates the old proverb, 'Gratitude consists in a lively sense of favours to come.' When I realised what I had done, confusion covered me.

After the death of Frau Ottilie her sons, who were about the most unbusinesslike men imaginable, seem to have consulted my mother about their affairs. They had no idea of their income and we always thought them exceedingly poor. Certainly it was from no miserliness that they stinted themselves, but from sheer want of business faculties. The feeling

of *Pietät* towards both grandfather and mother was very strong, and nothing was ever altered nor any rearrangement made.

My mother at length persuaded them to let her a suite of rooms which was standing empty and only getting more and more dilapidated, and after it was put in order we moved into the Goethe-house in the late summer of 1873 and lived there until our return to England in April 1876. The entrance to our rooms was at the top of the grand staircase. The door opened straight into the yellow salon, a long, narrow, uncomfortably-shaped room with two windows to the street; leading out of this was the blue room with a classic frieze and vaulted ceiling painted with garlands. This room was really a covered bridge from the front part to the old rooms at the back across the courtyard; being open to the air on two sides as well as top and bottom it was bitterly cold in winter, and as there were no means of heating it was useless except in summer. Beyond the blue room was a little entrance painted duck's-egg green, and beyond that a little arched wooden platform and steps leading to the garden.

The colours of these rooms when they were done up had to be matched very carefully so as to preserve the effect as Goethe meant it to be (I always understood that it had something to do with his *Farbenlehre*), and I was greatly surprised when I visited the house lately, as it is now turned into a museum, to find that the blue was a much harsher shade of colour and that it had been carried through into the little entry beyond. In this latter there was a mysterious door without a handle, papered like the wall but not locked. We children managed to open it, moved a few of the books on the shelves that filled the door recess and got into an enchanted land, a whole suite of rooms looking on to the garden, fully furnished in quaint old style, even to a piano and music. These were Baron Wolf's rooms but rarely inhabited by him. I went through them once by the legitimate door, when I found old Minchen doing some cleaning, badly wanted.

This was one of the many mysteries of the old house. Another was a dark cupboard on one of the back staircases containing Goethe's firewood, which had never been touched since his death and was covered with dirt and cobwebs! Our empty boxes were stowed in part of an old attic partitioned off by wooden slats. Through these we saw all sorts of treasures,

boxes, papers, old furniture, &c.; and once I saw into a locked room on the ground floor, and have a dim vision of shelves, tables and floor covered with books and papers, bales and bundles and piles of them, and over all a fine layer of dust. We also penetrated, without any difficulty, into the recesses of the two garden pavilions, and studied the minerals lying about. Fortunately we had been brought up with reverence for books, antiquities and other people's possessions generally, else the consequences might have been disastrous.

Leading out of the yellow salon, the Juno room (so called from a huge bust of that goddess which it contained) and those beyond were then in museum order and locked, but the door to the right led into a comfortable large square room heated by a tall white Berlin stove; beyond that the alcove room and, still further, a large bedroom with the end door leading to the back quarters. This room had a most peculiar and unpleasant odour of its own, which no amount of ventilation would remove. When the house was thoroughly done up after the death of the last of the family, the flooring beams and joists were found to be a mass of mildew and dry-rot, and it is a wonder that we had not fallen through.

In one of the cellars, down a dark mysterious flight of steps, was a well of the purest, coldest water imaginable, very hard and quite useless for tea-making or washing, but as a summer drink delicious. Inside the right-hand large door leading into the courtyard, at the back, was the coachhouse, containing a huge and ancient coach, hung on leather straps; moth-eaten and decayed, it looked as if it had stood there for half a century without being touched.

Minchen, to whom reference has been made, was an old and faithful creature who had been in the family practically all her life and remembered Goethe in his old age. She and another old crony, Johanna, lived on the ground floor in the rooms to the left of the entrance, and served the Barons with the greatest zeal and affection. They were both very dirty, but we loved them all the same, and the feeling was reciprocated, except when we came in with dirty boots and forgot to wipe them, when Johanna came out like a dragon. Minchen wore a dreadful brown wig which seemed in a subtle way to accentuate the dirt in the wrinkles. One day the dear old thing was ill, and my mother, going up to see her, discovered her with beautiful silky

white hair. On inquiring why she covered it all up she answered 'You see, *gnädige Frau*, Frau C. gives me her old wigs, and I must wear them out of gratitude.'

The two Barons Walther and Wolfgang lived above us in the *Mansarde*, and we saw the former very often. The latter was a good deal away and when in Weimar suffered terribly from neuralgia, to which he was a lifelong martyr. They were both very musical and we often used to hear 'Onkel Walther' playing. Every now and then Baron Wolf would come down and play duets with me, generally Beethoven's 'Symphonies,' but he was terribly shy, and I see him now, waiting in the doorway to know if he were really welcome. He had the most beautiful eyes I ever saw, large, dark brown, very bright, and melancholy, like a dog's eyes.

The garden had in those days a peaceful secluded air, several large trees, amongst them a magnificent copper beech, giving cool and grateful shade; and at the west end in the open sunshine were lovely roses, a row of them with other sweet old-fashioned flowers right under the study windows.

As I stood there not many days ago and looked round, a crowd of memories surged over me. The walks were the same; the roses under the study window bloomed as of old; the trees had only grown out and gave more shade; the old high hedge with its yellow blossom still guarded the mysterious walk where I always pictured the great master walking up and down composing some of his works. But although house and garden are kept and preserved with loving and reverent care, to me an air of desolation lay over all, and the peaceful seclusion had departed. Great tall modern houses flaunted themselves, peering over the wall, as if to see what was the attraction in that world-famed corner, and the hoot of motor-cars desecrated the silence.

And the old house, so full of the keenest life and intellect, whose walls echoed with love and laughter, wit and brilliancy, tears and sorrow—a cold museum! The cosy pretty rooms of the *Mansarde*, bare and deserted—a dead place! I looked in vain for the round table where Frau Ottilie sat, and the favourite chair of Fanny Mendelssohn, Baron Walther's beloved piano, and the portfolios full of treasures. All have vanished, and only the sweet and warm memory of those days remains.

MARIQUITA J. MOBERLY.

AT DAVENTRY IN 1615: A GLIMPSE OF SHAKESPEARE.

BY ARCHDEACON HUTTON.

I.

It is most difficult, one knows, when the records of the past are examined, or when one's own knowledge of it is tested, to distinguish between memory and tradition, between history and mere invention. My grandfather was born in 1750, and I am not yet so old as he was when my father was born, or as my father was when I was born myself. On the other side, my mother's grandmother was born in 1745 and lived for three years beyond a century. And her daughter was a passionate admirer of the stage, of Kean and Macready, and above all of Shakespeare. I cannot tell you where this story that I give comes from. The man who tells it may well have left a grandson alive when George the Second was king. However that may be, I guarantee nothing. I only tell the story as it comes to me.

II.

Do I remember seeing Master Shakespeare? Yes, that I do, as it were but yesterday, for the day was the beginning of matters that have carried on, year in and out, till to-day. I was a little lad just beginning to learn to reckon with counters then, and now I am my lord's old steward: yet it seems only yesterday.

'Twas at the very end of 1615, may be the eve of our Lady's Feast, for I remember the March wind blew shrewdly as I came back from school that afternoon, and I stood in the street at Daventry just by the corner where the way goes up to the church, mighty proud of my little coat of fur that my father had brought me from Muscovy, where, as he said, even the young children wore such garb. I stayed at the corner just by the Lamb Inn, for I saw that some gentle-folk had ridden up and were greeting as they met in front of the inn door. 'What, Michael!' said one, 'how hast thou journeyed?' and he was a fair, stout man and bearded, and when he doffed his hat in courtesy, I saw that there was no hair where the hat had been. 'Well met, Will,' said the other, who had a man

with a pack-saddle riding behind him, his servant I doubt not. 'Well met; and I take it kindly of thee to ride all these miles in welcome to thy shire. In good sooth thou anticipat'st me; for we are still, as I take it, some miles from Southam, and many more from Warwick and thine own town.'

With that there came to the inn door, the landlord, Master Christopher Hedgestake, whom well I knew, and it seemed to me that he stood not straight upright as he looked from one to the other of the gentlemen. 'What, Master Shakespeare!' said he; and it seemed he could say no more. But the bright-faced gentleman descended from his roan, a serving lad holding the stirrup, and he said, in his clear voice that, as I think now, sounded like a runlet of claret wine, 'What, goodman Tossopot, how cam'st thou so early by this lethargy?' What Master Christopher answered I could not hear, though I thought I heard the bold word 'defy,' for at that moment a window over the door opened and there came a loud cough again and again, so that his words could not reach me. And I looked up and saw at the window a lady, very beautiful with shining eyes and a face so rosy-hued that I thought she must come from London town, for we have none so bright faced in our parts. As she coughed, the other gentleman looked up and smiled. Then he smote his hand on his breast and heaved a mighty sigh; and she shut the window: yet I saw her nose against the pane. And the gentleman, he whom Master Shakespeare had called Michael, said—

'I follow her that ever flies from me,
Oh love, oh hope, quite turned to despair'

But Master Shakespeare laughed and said 'Dost thou forget the true Anne, whom, when thou hast been with me, thou goest to visit at Clifford?' Master Michael heeded him not, but stood (for he was now off his nag) with his hands clasped before the window, and said—

'Now will I make a mirror of my dolours.'

'Thy groats, not thy groans,' said Master Shakespeare; 'finish thy ale and let us be on the road, and so farewell to the red-nose innkeeper of Daventry.' By this time Master Christopher had fallen asleep on his bench by the door; but he woke at that, and I thought he would speak, when there came ambling up a fine steed, with bright caparison, and on him a very stately gentleman in rich attire, whom two horsemen followed, with luces on their coats.

The two gentlemen had finished their ale and paid their reckoning by a groat flung on to the table, and one of them (I know not which) was saying softly, in a sort of note as though he sang, 'Harpier cries, 'tis time, 'tis time,' when I saw the window open again and the lady looked forth but an instant, and Master Christopher was broad awake, gazing upon the rich gentleman and his servants as they drew near. 'Who is that fair lady, Master Hedge-stake?' said Master Shakespeare. 'Why, her nose is as sharp as the pen on thy table of green frieze.' But before he answered—and indeed he looked as though he would not—the gentleman on his horse drew up at the door, and the window shut again sharply, and Master Michael said 'She would always say she could not abide Master ——' I did not hear the last word, for one said 'Our word was—Hem! boys,' and then the horses began to stamp, and the two gentlemen and the servant were clattering down the hill. I ran after them, for it was my way home. When I came to the corner where the road turned, there were the gentlemen standing still. 'Which road goes by Staverton?' said one. 'This,' said I. And Master Shakespeare looked at me, heaved a sigh, and said 'What is thy name, my pretty fellow?' I was but six years old, and my voice piped, I doubt not, as I answered, 'Benedick Shugborough, so please you.' 'And I bless you for your name,' said he, and they rode away.

III.

'And what,' we asked him, 'befell the red-nose innkeeper of Daventry?' 'I will tell you,' said the steward. 'He still drew ale when King Charles was at Daventry thirty years after that day. And the noontide when he rode out to hunt at Fawsley—it was the day before Naseby fight, God rest his soul!—I saw him stay by the door while one of his lords came forth to greet him, and a messenger came up, as they said, from Prince Rupert. As the King read the lines that were given him he smiled cheerfully, and then he saw Master Hedgestake bowing to the ground before him; and he smiled again, yet with a princely graciousness. As he turned away the lord came beside him and said "Behold him that your majesty hath read of, whose shirt they robbed from the hedge." "Why, so," said the King, "the red-nose innkeeper of Daventry." And he rode away.

'Yes, I had seen the King before, the day of Edgehill, as he rode

by Shugborough ; and I have seen Queen Mary, and Master Shakespeare's daughter. Of that sometime I may tell you ; but this was the only time I saw Master Shakespeare.'

IV.

' But what befell him of the red nose ? '

' Why, it was the year King Charles had his own again ; and Lambert stood for the Parliament—what was left of it, not the free one the General promised us—or for the Army, or for himself ; and he rode forth thinking to make a last fight for the honour and glory of those that slew King Charles, our martyr. But his men would not stand, and I saw Colonel Ingoldsby take him, on the hill by the church at Staverton. And as I went back into Daventry the bell was tolling, and the women were standing at the doors with their arms akimbo, to see the soldiers go by. And one said ' For whose soul tolls that bell ? For them that fell at Naseby, or them that fled at Staverton ? ' And another answered, ' Nay, Captain, it is for the red-nose innkeeper of Daventry.'

V.

You ask me, can I explain this tale with all its phrases, which everyone will know, from Shakespeare and Michael Drayton ? Why, no ; how should I ? It is quite true that there is a road from Daventry to Staverton, and it goes on into Warwickshire, by Shuckburgh and Napton and Southam—where King Charles stayed on his way to Edgehill : the stones are alive at this day to testify it. It is quite true that Lambert tried to fight when all England wanted the Restoration, and that he was taken by Ingoldsby at Staverton. It is quite true that Charles was at Daventry just before Naseby fight, and hunted at Fawsley. It is quite true that you find it said, by one who may have known, that Michael Drayton came to visit Shakespeare about the beginning of 1616 (in the old style), just before his death ; and it is quite true that the lady he had loved married and lived at Clifford Chambers. But further than that how can I go ? May not the teller of the tale have been reading Drayton, and seeing Mr. Benson's Company act ' King Henry IV.' and fallen asleep and dreamed all the rest ? Who shall say ?

THE GULF.

AFTER the first excitement of freedom and homecoming, the life at No. 23 Mount Stuart Terrace, Seabourne, began to reveal itself to the girl in all its mean, unlovely outlines. She was initiated into her mother's petty, boarding-house economies, and became with bewildering suddenness a household drudge, who went errands, cleaned silver, counted linen and weighed stores. In a month the austere refinement of the convent life she had left seemed to her of all things the most desirable, and she cried herself to sleep at nights over the appalling prospect of this continuing to be her life. Yet she did what she was told without complaint; the habit of instant, unquestioning obedience is not easily broken.

And then suddenly one day all the ugliness and drudgery came—for her—to a miraculous end.

It was after breakfast; the 'guests' had scattered for the morning, and Mrs. Huntly was reading her letters while her daughter cleared the table.

'Well, Jean,' she said, as she folded the last one, 'don't you want to put your hair up?'

The girl flushed at the unexpected question.

'I—I thought it would look silly with this,' she faltered, and touched the short brown alpaca dress that was the convent uniform.

'Of course it would,' agreed her mother, in brisk good humour. 'It's high time you had something else. We'll go and see about it this afternoon.'

The result was two cotton frocks, a simple hat, and a white muslin dress for evenings—to Jean a dazzling array of fashion and elegance.

On their way home her mother opened out new vistas of change.

'Maurice wrote this morning to say that he is coming home to-morrow.'

'Oh!' Jean flushed with pleasure; her only brother was almost a stranger to her.

'And he is bringing with him Mr. Anthony Vyne,' her mother pursued, 'for whom he fagged at school. That is the best of a good school; there are so many compensations for the bad education.'

'Yes,' said Jean, anxious to please, and without the remotest idea of her mother's meaning.

'I want you,' went on Mrs. Huntly, 'to try to make Mr. Vyne enjoy his visit. It may lead——' she paused.

'Yes?' The girl raised her eyes, with their young, pellucid candour, to her mother's face.

'To—well, others,' Mrs. Huntly explained, 'and to changing the class of our guests.'

'I see. But what can I do, mother?'

Mrs. Huntly gave a short laugh. 'There's nothing like a convent education—for girls,' she said, with the apparent irrelevance that was always bewildering Jean. 'Do? Why, nothing—except enjoy yourself. I shan't need you in the house so much now, Jean, and you and Maurice must take Mr. Vyne out, and show him all the sights, and have picnics on the downs, and so on.'

It was a dazzling prospect, and the girl lay awake that night not with misery but excitement. No wonder that Mr. Anthony Vyne, for whom were wrought these magnificent changes, was already a splendid and knightly being in her imagination.

It was in the drawing-room just before dinner that she saw him next day, and was instantly aware of some attribute in him that everyone else in the room lacked. Dimly she recognised it; it was the something she had grown accustomed to in the nuns and her schoolfellows, and had missed in her mother and the 'guests.' He, too, seemed to feel its subtle, irresistible influence, and across the width of the room their eyes met. Jean was, by training and association, of Vyne's and not of her mother's class.

'Your sister?' Vyne asked the young man beside him.

'Yes.' Maurice beckoned to Jean, and she crossed the room slowly and shyly, half excited and half abashed by the consciousness of her new long dress and the strangeness of the twisted coil of hair at her neck.

'By Jove!' thought her brother, who had seen her an hour earlier in the brown alpaca dress, 'the Mater's going it!' He had none of his sister's difficulties in understanding their mother.

To Vyne the girl seemed like some drifting white blossom that had lost its way among thorns.

'Well, Jeanie,' teased her brother, 'how do you feel?'

The girl started. 'Oh, Maurice!' she reproached, in a low voice. Vyne was looking puzzled.

'You must know,' explained Maurice, 'that you're privileged

to be present, Vyne, at the—the private view of a young lady in the making. This afternoon Jean's skirt was short and her hair down. She is now—what you see, and entitled to a formal introduction. Allow me! Mr. Vyne—Miss Huntly. All over! Feel any different after it, Jean?’

By a slight, dexterous movement, Vyne interposed his body so as to rearrange their grouping.

‘The cold shoulder,’ laughed Maurice, and turned away.

On their way to the dining-room Vyne looked smilingly at the face of the girl beside him.

‘It must be a curious feeling,’ he said, ‘this chrysalis to butterfly transformation. We dull men go through nothing to compare with it. What is it really like, Miss Huntly?’

She gave a little low laugh and shook her head.

‘I can't quite make out.’ Her eyes were eager and puzzled. ‘It's very queer, and—and rather nice, I think. There seems to be so much that's *new*; I don't know how to explain, but new sort of feelings, I mean, that haven't got any names.’

‘That must be very interesting,’ he said, gravely.

‘Oh!’ She gave him a startled glance. ‘You're laughing at me.’

His heart thrilled to the half shrinking appeal. Had he really found her—the child-girl who was free from all guile? Was it indeed reserved for him to give names to the new things, in the certainty that they were really new and without taint?

‘Upon my honour,’ he said, ‘I'm not.’

The next morning the three of them set out with a picnic-basket. Maurice stayed with them that day and the next and the third. Then he began to leave them for an hour at a time—to fish—to bathe—finally for hours and without any pretext. He had his mother's instructions, and if she showed astute generalship he was not less able a lieutenant. He was acute enough to foresee many advantages to himself in the realisation of the maternal plan.

A month slipped by, and every day towards the end Vyne said to himself ‘I will speak.’ Yet, because the days were already perfect, and perfection cannot surpass itself, he delayed.

One morning Jean had left him alone while she gathered wild flowers, and he lay stretched on the warm slope of the glen waiting for the sheer pleasure of watching her return. She came, her hands filled with harebells, her cotton dress blown by the wind and outlining her slim, straight young body against the sea and sky.

Vyne sat up.

'The hills look out on the South,
And southward dreams the sea,
And with the sea-breeze hand in hand
Came innocence and she,'

he quoted softly.

The girl let the harebells drop at his feet, and her eyes were dim with a rush of tears. "'Southward dreams the sea,'" she repeated, below her breath. 'It's so beautiful that—that it hurts,' she said; 'was it written here?'

'I don't know.'

'Because you'd think whoever wrote it must have sat just here, looking out at it just like us, wouldn't you?'

'Yes,' he said, 'just like us,' but there was no change in the soft dreaminess of her eyes. It was the poem alone of which she was thinking; her heart still hung, as it were, delicately quivering on its pivot, unconscious of the magnet toward which it trembled.

Maurice's whistle from the beach broke the spell; they raced down to him, unpacked the basket and lunched. The long, lazy afternoon slid by; no premonition warned them that it was the last.

As usual they all got back in time for dinner. On the hall table lay a letter for Vyne. He read it, and frowned.

'Jean!' he called, softly.

She turned on the stairs and he ran up to her. 'My mother's taken it into her head to come down for the day to-morrow. I shall have to take her about.'

The girl's face showed her disappointment, but she fought it down. 'Yes, of course,' she agreed, and, struck by a sudden thought, went in search of Mrs. Huntly.

'Mother, dear,' she cried, 'I've got good news for you. Mr. Vyne's just heard from his mother. She's coming to-morrow. It's only for the day, but still it might lead, mightn't it——'

Her mother's sharp exclamation stopped her.

'To-morrow? Are you sure?'

'Yes, he said so,' Jean faltered. 'Are you—sorry?'

Mrs. Huntly looked at her with a sort of grim resignation. 'My dear Jean, I'm inclined to think the convent has rather overdone the thing, after all. Oh, yes, I'm sorry. Now go and dress.'

The manner in which both her mother and Vyne had received the news of Mrs. Vyne's coming enhanced for Jean the natural awesomeness of that lady's appearance and bearing.

'Your daughter?' she asked Mrs. Huntly when Jean first came within her line of vision, and if she had said 'The scullery-maid?' or 'A worm?' the effect could scarcely have been more pulverising.

After lunch Jean escaped thankfully to the garden. Past the deserted tennis-court and the gaudy, vulgar pagoda where tea was served on fine afternoons, the girl went. Even the hammocks were unoccupied, and the strangeness of this latter fact reminded her that it was the day of the regatta, and all the 'guests' had gone to it. She took possession of a hammock with a little sigh. How different from the golden afternoons of the last month! She closed her eyes to live them again.

'My dear boy, haven't I saved you from fifty or so? You mustn't be angry because I try to save you from the fifty-first.'

Jean opened her eyes with a start. There was no mistaking the clean-cut, measured tones, even though Mrs. Vyne's voice was lowered. She glanced round apprehensively, but could see no one. Then she realised they must be in the pagoda—mother and son. Before she could think what she ought to do Vyne was answering, and his tone was restive.

'Well, what have you got against her, mother?'

'Anthony, she's a dangerous woman. Don't look so fierce; I know what I'm talking about. She used to be a Miss Piercy, and nursery-governess to the Mount-Edgeworth girls. There was an affair with young Mount-Edgeworth before he came into the title; she nearly caught him. They had to pay heavily, and later she married a Captain Huntly—poor, but greatly her social superior—who was killed in action a few years later. Since then she's gone in for this boarding-house business.'

Jean flushed and paled; only at the sound of her father's name did she grasp the subject under discussion. Her first impulse was to fly; then she remembered there was no means of escape that did not lead past the pagoda. Only her present refuge behind it was invisible. Her heart beat wildly.

'Well,' she heard Vyne answer, 'I'm not proposing to marry the mother, you know.'

'My dear, do you really think a girl can touch pitch——?'

'But she hasn't touched pitch! An uncle on her father's side paid for her education. She's been for years at a convent school, and spent her holidays with the uncle.'

'Except for the last six months at home, Anthony. You can't ignore them. What reason do you suppose her mother has

given her for spending her days with you if not that you are a "catch" ?'

The girl made an effort to move—to cry out—but she could not. She was held with the inexorable, rigid cords that are the foundation of all nightmares. She waited with sickening anxiety for his voice. Surely—surely the answer was obvious enough ?

There was a long pause. 'I—don't—know,' she heard him say hesitatingly at last. 'Oh, mother, you're spoiling it all for me !'

'Do you think I don't know, and am not sorry, dear ?' Mrs. Vyne's voice had melted to an undreamed-of tenderness. 'Anthony, it's hard, but it has to be faced. Either one must do without a name and position and money, or without romance. You're vexed with me now, because you thought you were cheating fate into giving you both. But you'll be glad later when you've escaped. Haven't you always been glad in the end ?'

'This was different.'

'Only in your having a cleverer woman than usual to deal with. At bottom there's all the same machinery. The girl's got the eyes of a Madonna, I admit, but they're only another noose to catch you with. She can't have such a mother without being contaminated. The brother and she are both in it, Anthony ; it couldn't have worked so smoothly otherwise. Won't you trust me and get out of it while you can ? We can catch the 5.17, and be gone before they all get back.'

Jean waited, as it seemed, till the end of time, and then there came the sound she expected—the sound of chairs being pushed back. Their voices and footsteps grew fainter ; in Vyne's tone were still hesitation, protest, unwillingness, yet through it all the girl caught the predominant note—surrender. . . .

Her mother came out to her in the dusk.

'Well,' she said, harshly, 'you've played your cards finely, I must say. It wouldn't have taken *me* a month to bring him to the point. They've both gone by the 5.17, and it will be a long time before such another chance comes our way.'

It was the first time she had spoken with naked plainness, and she awaited, impatiently enough, tears and a scene. Neither came.

White and mute the girl passed her and went to her room ; not through the gate of tears does the iron enter into the soul.

A project that had been dimly forming in her mind a month earlier took definite shape. She began methodically to collect her

clothes and fold them. Half an hour later Mrs. Huntly opened the door. Her shrewd eyes narrowed.

'It never does to run after them,' she said.

For a moment the girl stood paralysed. Then she crimsoned.

'Mother!' It was the cry of a child left irrevocably motherless. When she spoke again it was as though the fount of her voice was frozen.

'I am going,' she said, 'to Uncle Henry. He will get me a post as a teacher.'

II.

As the clock struck the half-hour Vyne realised that he could no longer dally with the question of how he was going to receive Jean. It had to be answered, since at five o'clock she would arrive. Was he going to marry her or not? He set himself determinedly to face the issue.

The old days—ten years old—came back at his call. How miserable he had been, in a luxurious, sentimental way, after his flight from Jean, till that other tragedy, so much more startling and irretrievable—his only sister's runaway marriage with Maurice Huntly—had come to take its place, and kill his mother. Kate herself, broken and trailed in the dust by Maurice, was six years dead; and now Maurice, too, was gone, and of the hapless, unequal union there survived only bitter memories, and one blossom—Jeanetta.

His face softened. It was for Jeanetta's sake that he was lying passive while Mrs. Huntly, like an elderly, indefatigable spider, still wove her webs about him. Of course he could break them with a touch, but was he going to? If he wanted to marry Jean, at last and after all, was he to be deterred because Mrs. Huntly was scheming to get Jean married to him? On the whole, he thought he did want to marry her, provided she was still ladylike and pleasant and otherwise passable. He was thirty-four, and the ideal wife, for whom his mother had made such industrious search, had never been forthcoming. As for Jeanetta, he was quite sure he wanted her, and there really seemed no other way of securing her. It might even be mildly pleasant to bring ease and colour into the life of a hardworked high-school mistress. Yes, on the whole—

He heard the faint whirr of an electric bell in the distance, and hurriedly opened a book.

'Provided she isn't too schoolmistressy,' he stipulated with himself.

'Miss Huntly.'

Vyne came forward.

'I hope I haven't kept you waiting?' Jean said. 'I've come straight on from school.' She swung a small strapful of books in confirmation of her words.

'Not at all,' he answered, mechanically. 'Won't you sit down?'

She had changed; that was the first thing he saw. Yet it was not a change from youth to any halfway house on the road to age; if anything, she was more beautiful than she had been at eighteen. It was something more subtle than that; the finer moulding of a lip, the steadier purpose in a glance; records of a spirit's growth.

'Thank you. Mr. Vyne, I think we must speak quite frankly about Jeanetta and the—arrangement.'

He bowed a wary assent, mindful of webs.

'You promised Maurice, did you not, to be his daughter's guardian?'

'Yes.'

'You understood him to mean sole guardian?'

'Well—yes.' He made a deprecating gesture. 'Though, of course, I don't mind—'

'Thank you. The same method was adopted in my case—I am afraid my mother must be held responsible rather than Maurice—with the result that we find ourselves Jeanetta's co-guardians and trustees.'

He nodded.

'The meaning of this trick,' Jean went on, 'is, of course, obvious; the conditions of the will make it glaringly so. We are to have the child six months each, to meet quarterly, to have joint and equal responsibilities, and so forth. Jeanetta's tiny income from her mother would have to be the millions of an American heiress to allow of any other interpretation.'

He felt himself unequal to such frankness as this. 'Any other—?' he hedged, uncomfortably.

Jean's lips quivered in a kind of good-humoured derision. 'I thought we agreed to speak out,' she reproached. 'Well, never mind. I'll do it all, since somebody must.' She met his eyes.

'It is difficult,' she added, with sudden gravity, 'for me to tell you the truth, just because I know how difficult it will be for you to believe it.'

'I assure you——'

'But please don't. Let us leave it at that: it *is* difficult for both of us. Your family has suffered many things at the hands of mine; this guardianship arrangement mustn't make another. My mother's hope, of course, is that our frequent meetings as Jeanetta's guardians may lead to your wishing to marry me; or, failing that, that Jeanetta may grow so dear to you as to make you willing to marry me in order never to part from her. What I have to try to make you believe is that I am as determined as you to defeat this plan.' Her voice had never faltered, but by the end her face was quite colourless, and he noticed how tightly clenched was the hand that held the book-strap. He felt a rush of pity; whatever was the truth of the case, there could be no doubt that she was suffering. He stood up.

'Miss Huntly—Jean, please don't let it distress you. I have only been waiting for an opportunity to tell you my feeling about it all. You say you are as determined as I to—to defeat your mother. But will you allow me to say that I am not determined at all?—that, in fact, I should be honoured if you would marry me?'

It was the best he could do, and not, he reflected, so very bad. If there was no suggestion of fervour, at least there was no note of condescension, either.

To his astonishment Jean gave a little, soft laugh. 'You really care as much as that,' she asked, 'for Jeanetta?'

He reddened. How quick women were! Perhaps it was safest not to deny Jeanetta?

'Even if,' he said, with a hint of stiffness, 'I think partly of the child's interests, is that a crime? Don't you?'

'Yes,' she answered, 'but some things are impossible.'

The quiet finality of her tone stung him. 'I never knew you hated me,' he said, ungenerously.

The taunt awakened a demon of mocking laughter in her eyes. 'You never asked me to marry you before,' she answered, and he had to acknowledge the justice of the thrust.

'Then you do dislike me too much?' he persisted, nevertheless. There was piquancy in the thought to the man whom too many women had delighted to honour.

'Dislike?' She met his eyes frankly. 'Oh, no! How can there be any question of that sort between us?'

'I don't understand. Why not?'

'Don't you? Yet it's simple; only that

'I will not be
A pensioner in marriage. Sacraments
Are not to feed the paupers of the world.'

You will have to be content with having Jeanetta only half the year. Which reminds me that I have a request to make. My summer holidays begin next week; may my half of the year last from now till the middle of January? You see, that would bring my two longest holidays into my half, which will be more cheerful for Jeanetta than term-time.'

'Yes,' he said, with an effort. 'It is all the same to me.'

Her glance kindled. 'No, it isn't,' she answered, softly. 'It means you have to wait six months, and that is hard. Thank you.'

She rose to go.

'Good-bye,' he said, and something in his voice—some touch of serenity or confidence—caught her quick ear. She frowned thoughtfully, and he waited in apprehension. Had she really by some intuitive process divined his thought, which had been, 'This won't last; she's only holding off a while—?'

'Mr. Vyne,' she said at last, 'we can't—leave it like this.' (She had, then!)

'Like what?' he asked, guiltily.

Her voice was low and tired. 'I mean—some vestige of pride remains to me, some necessity to be not wholly at your mercy. And so—there seems no other way.' Her lips quivered slightly, but she held his eyes without faltering. 'I want you to know that, if you ever again ask me to marry you, you will be forcing me to give Jeanetta up to you entirely. That is all. Good-bye.'

'Hold me up,' begged Jeanetta in a whisper.

Vyne lifted her to the window, and silently they watched Jean's retreating form. At the corner she turned, smiling and waving. Then she disappeared; it was her last glimpse of Jeanetta for another six months.

Jeanetta gulped back a sob. Her grey, unnatural childhood had taught her an infinitely pathetic, unchildlike self-control: to both of them she was the dearer for it.

'Uncle Tony!' she faltered, confident of sympathy. 'Oh, Uncle Tony!'

But for once there was no response; his face was drawn and haggard.

Jeanetta's fingers touched his cheek. 'Dearest, you're not well?'

He started. The look, the tender tone were Jean's, unconsciously copied, and smote him with intolerable pain. Just so must Jean have spoken to Jeanetta a thousand times: just so she would never speak to him. It was from her image stamped on the child's soul that he had learnt at last to know Jean—and, knowing, to seek in vain for one door not locked to hope.

'I'm all right, Netta,' he answered, with an effort; 'quite well.' He carried her to the fire, and sat down with her in his arms.

'Then you're miserable, Uncle Tony?' she urged anxiously.

He tried to smile. 'Aren't we all always miserable on Change Days, Netta?'

Her lips quivered. 'It gets worse every time,' she whispered. 'Uncle Tony, please don't mind my suggesting it, but wouldn't it be nice if you were to marry Auntie Jean, and we all lived together always?'

He drew her closer so that she could not see his face. 'Very nice, sweetheart.'

'Then why don't you?'

'Because Auntie Jean doesn't like the idea.'

'Oh!' Jeanetta thought deeply. 'And yet——' she broke off.

'Well, Netta dear?'

'She likes you.'

'Oh, of course! Who wouldn't?' he demanded hilariously.

The child was not deceived. 'But she does,' she insisted. 'Only—only—' she was clearly battling with some problem.

'What is it, baby? Don't worry,' Vyne said, tenderly.

'But it's—it's so difficult,' the child cried piteously, 'to know how much it would be honourable to tell you, Uncle Tony, isn't it?' His heart smote him; what sort of cares were these to be cast on a child of nine? 'Only I—I know she does.'

Jeanetta's insistence set his pulses stirring with a wild hope. 'Netta! How do you know?'

She hesitated. 'That's just it; ought I to say? She never lets me tell her things—private things about you, Do you think—?'

It whipped the colour to his cheeks. 'No, Netta, you're quite right. You mustn't tell me.'

Honour—even honour he had to learn from Jean through the child's lips: from Jean, whom he had first set aside as besmirched, and afterwards condescended to reconsider, for Jeanetta's sake. No wonder his punishment endured!

'Uncle Tony, why doesn't she like the idea?'

Vyne had theories with regard to telling children the truth. He answered, frankly, 'Well, sweetheart, she thinks I only want to marry her for your sake—so as never to be parted from you.'

To this the child gave absorbed attention. 'You mean she thinks you love me best?—better than her?'

'Yes.'

'Oh!' Jeanetta smiled, wisely. 'But grown-ups don't love children best,' she announced.

'Jeanetta! You—you young Solomon! How do you know that?'

But Jeanetta was absorbed in the main issue. 'So if we could only persuade her you did love her best, Uncle Tony——?' she urged.

He kissed her. 'If, Netta,' he agreed, humouring her, and silence fell.

Suddenly Jeanetta broke it. 'Uncle Tony!' She drew a deep breath, 'I've got the—most—tremendous idea!' She pulled his head down, and whispered.

'By Jove!' Vyne stared at her, his eyes alert and eager. 'I believe you have. Jeanetta, if there is a way, you've found it. We'll—yes, we'll risk it!'

Jeanetta nodded, vigorously. He gave her a keen glance.

'But you?' he said, doubtfully. 'Can you stand it?'

The child's body stiffened. 'Of course I can!' she declared, and then suddenly nestled closer. 'Till—till Change Day, anyhow,' she said. 'The last Change Day.'

'You—little brick!' Vyne whispered.

So, when the middle of July brought Jean again, Jeanetta was not waiting as usual. Jean looked round eagerly as the door opened, and Vyne came in alone.

'Jeanetta is not ready?' she asked.

He shut the door. 'May I have a few words with you first?'

She assented, coldly. 'What is it?'

'Only this: I want once more to ask you to marry me.'

It caught her like a blow ; she shrank back.

'So it's come,' she said, in a dazed voice. 'You—you can't live without her, and you force me to give her up.' Sudden scorn blazed in her eyes. 'Aren't you afraid I may say Yes ?'

'Jean !' He winced.

She ignored the cry. 'May I see Jeanetta to say good-bye ?' Her voice was ice. And this was the moment on which he must venture all ! It appalled him.

'I'm afraid you can't,' he said, lamely.

'Can't ? She's not—ill ?'

'No, not ill. She's away.'

Her brows met in a quick frown of concentration.

'Where ?' she demanded.

'At school.'

It forced a cry from her. 'You've sent—that baby—to school ?' 'She asked to go.'

Her gesture was indignant. 'As if she could know ! Besides, what right had you, without my consent ?'

'I had absolutely no right.'

She searched his face for a key to his bald, halting words. Then she walked impatiently to the window.

'When did you do it ?'

'Six months ago. Except for the Easter holidays I have not seen her.'

'But why ?—why ?'

'Jean ! Will you not see ? Jeanetta and I have done the best we could.'

'What has Jeanetta to do with it ?'

'It was her idea.'

'Oh !' she cried. 'Will you never tell me plainly what it all means ?'

He waited till, in surprise, she turned her head.

'You thought,' he answered, with a passion of sincerity, 'that I wanted to marry you so as to keep Jeanetta. Didn't I have to prove I could live without Jeanetta in order to prove I couldn't live without you ?'

It was as though a lightning flash had riven the skies, leaving behind it the heavens opened.

'You did it—you have lived all these months without her—for me ?—to prove to me ?—'

'My dear ! My dear ! Is it proved ?'

Her lips parted in a strange, startled smile. 'Why—why, I think so. It means, doesn't it, that after all it's the—real—thing now?' Her voice broke on a sob. 'Anthony! Doesn't it?'

'The real thing,' he answered, humbly.

Suddenly she was beside him, and her hands in his. 'It seems,' she said, a little unsteadily, 'that, after all, I am to be a pensioner——'

He met her eyes, startled. They were clear pools of laughter.

'For kisses,' she murmured. . . .

'Anthony!' With a remorseful cry she broke away. 'Our lamb! Our little, sacrificial lamb!'

'Jeanetta?'

'Yes. When do her holidays begin?'

'On the 25th.'

'Ten days,' she mused, and with a new meaning he echoed, daringly, 'Ten days!'

Her eyes wavered.

'Jean,' he asked, 'would you? There would be time, and—we have waited so long.'

With a little laugh she turned to his writing-table. 'Where is the Bradshaw?' she asked.

'Here,' he said, bewildered. 'But, Jean, what—why——?'

'Please look up,' she said, softly, 'the train Jeanetta is to—come home by.'

V. H. FRIEDLAENDER.

CURLEW.

It is certain that the curlew has a place of his own in literature. Indeed, few birds have done such yeoman service—for the novelist at any rate. 'As Hamish descended the hill,' one reads, 'the curlews rose, calling plaintively from the little wood on the outskirts of which Jean was waiting for her lover.' The habits of these curlews were, to say the least of it, out of the common. Indeed, it may be confessed that the ornithological equipment of novelists (even the greatest) is not invariably accurate; but as long as they keep to the sea-shore or the moors they are fairly safe with the curlew, and probably to the end of time the bird will be used as a literary property by all and sundry.

On the other hand, it has inspired some great passages; among them the beautiful dedication of 'The Stickit Minister' to 'Robert Louis Stevenson, of Scotland and Samoa,' in the words

. . . 'I dedicate these tales of that grey Galloway land, where about the graves of the martyrs the whaups are crying—his heart remembers how.'

The cry of the curlew is, indeed, rarely absent from wildest Britain. It breeds from Cornwall to Caithness, and one of the things the British traveller first misses when camped beside an alien ocean is its queesting and sorrowful note. Still, one has to travel far to leave it behind; for its range extends (apart from allied forms which cover Turkestan, India, China, and the Malays) from Greenland round every European coast. Sometimes, also, the African traveller comes across it in the interior of the land of Ethiopia, and the pilgrim to Mecca hears it as he recites the attributes of God. Yet it is also to be found all the year round upon our own coasts, even in the nesting season, when the young cock-birds do not repair with the parents of the race to the high moors in order to undertake family cares, but live beside the tide edges where they are joined later by the vast flocks from the uplands.

The estimation in which curlew are held by individual shooters differs very greatly. Some place them amongst the most sporting of birds: to others their name is anathema. 'Those cursed curlew,'

says such a one, 'they lost me a fine chance at the widgeon. I wish they were all killed off.' So do not others. The curlew has given to some of us—at least—days or even weeks of interest, and has enlivened many a weary wait. He is a splendid bird on which to start the youthful sportsman; for though there is exaggeration in the old saying that he who has bagged seven curlew is a master of the gun, yet the boy who stalks and kills a curlew with a pea-rifle deserves to be permitted to cope with the horned beasts of the mountain.

There is in Jersey, on the eastern coast, where the sun rises over the sea from behind the stones of Dol, a long, long bay with a curving pebble beach of perfect symmetry. Here is a sea-wall carried on more or less continuously until it merges into the golf links. Standing almost on the wall are two or three martello towers, formerly rented as dwelling-places to the island peasantry. Some of these are farmers, others labourers; but one and all seem to possess the inalienable right to gather 'vraick' on the sea-edge opposite to their dwellings. This vraick, or sea-weed, is dried in the sun and used for purposes of manure. A part of it is burnt as fuel—the ashes afterwards enriching the ground. One of the farmers, an old friend, told me that in a single year he had gathered eighteen pounds' worth of 'vraick' and on eighteen pounds a year he and his wife (so strong is the thrifty Breton blood) were rich. I often went to see this old man in later years, for he was excellent company and had a considerable fund of dry humour. Congratulating me one day on my safe return from South America, he said 'I should like to travel too, me, ah, yes! *But not more than an hour from the land.*' He had never left Jersey but once, when he had gone with his white-capped, lean-faced old wife to Guernsey, where the two salient impressions he received were, first, that there were 'bad peoples' in that island who asked him 2d. a pound too much for butter; and secondly, that one could ride 'long ways' in the tram for a penny. Albeit, he was a very shrewd old fellow, crabbed to a degree; but having known me from a child was ever ready to further my youthful plans in any conceivable way—legal or illegal. Yet a more pig-headed antagonist than he habitually made to the world at large it would be quite impossible to conceive. He would certainly have died, pitchfork in hand, in defence of the least of his rights, and once, when a passing terrier chased his farm-cat (an animal which I know he loathed) on to the roof of his house, he ran after the carriage which the dog was accompanying almost into Gorey, three miles away. He is dead now, and let us hope

the verrick-scented sand lies lightly on his bones. He never showed the least outward sign of affection for his wife, but he only survived her a few weeks, struck suddenly by her loss out of a hale old age.

In a neighbouring farm lived Philip John Gaudin, who won the Queen's Prize for rifle shooting in the old days when the competition took place at Aldershot. He was not a sportsman, nor did he ever, to my knowledge, fire at a bird, though sometimes I used to persuade him to give me a lesson with the rifle. Never shall I forget, or cease to be grateful for his words spoken when he met me at the age of twelve carrying my first gun. 'Ah, young master, ah!' said he, 'here you come carrying the death of two men—one in each barrel—never forget—a very young man carrying two deaths!' To this day, it is difficult to watch a wild shot without remembering that cogent remark. Evening after evening old Philip and his three sons would lie with their rifles on the short grass outside the farm practising steadiness and position. For many years they were able to beat any other four that might essay to try conclusions with them. But (except when the Brent geese came) none of them, nor of the other farmers, ever fired a shot on the shore; and this though in the interior of the island (where shooting is free) every lane was patrolled by local or French sportsmen in search of blackbirds and fieldfare. A few gunners from across the Channel carried horns and blew them, but whether over the fallen thrush, who knows? Certainly there was little else to blow them over, for the last red-legged partridge had been slain at Plémont in 1876; and though there was still in 1888 a legendary hare, I did not hear that it ever came out from the land of myth into any of those green-tasseled game-bags. On the other hand, the shore despised by the gunners of the island was not ill-supplied with wading birds, and in the season with both widgeon and geese. At low tide a vast panorama of rock and sand was exposed, the tide receding to an immense distance. On the wide flats the curlew were naturally almost impossible of access, indeed the place possessed certain disabilities that made curlew shooting really difficult. Thus, when the flocks (there were in August but two or three of them) flew down from the hills above Grouville at the hour when their feeding grounds by the shore began to be exposed, they usually passed over too high to reach, and on the open flats a stalk was out of the question. Something was to be done by lying for hours among the rocks—but not much, as the area was so wide

that the flight was never concentrated. Each fortnight, however, brought two golden chances. These occurred when the tide reached its height just *before* dawn. Before dawn because the verrick-gatherers were terribly early people, and their appearance was, of course, always a signal for the curlew to seek the high lands in the interior of the island. But when high water heralded the dawn, the curlew gathered under the sea-wall in positions where they could be approached with every chance of success. Owing to the fact that the sea-wall was built into the dunes, there was no such thing—save here and there—as an easy approach. Every bird killed meant a crawl and a quick shot, if the weapon was a shot-gun; whereas one that fell to what Colonel Roosevelt calls 'the weapon of the freed-man'—that is, the rifle—was in reality a more worthy trophy than is many an outwitted stag.

Glorious dawns were those spent lying face downwards among the diamonds of the dew on the short close-growing turf that bordered the shingle ridge, when a successful shot had power to brighten the whole world, and a failure to darken it. Quite alone, and without advice or aid, I was in the happy position of being able to work out my own salvation. At the age of thirteen I conceived and carried out the brilliant idea of hiring (2s. a day, or 7s. 6d. the week) a huge single-barrelled eight-bore. It was almost as tall as its bearer, and it was not in any way necessary or desirable for shooting at curlew in August; but pride in its huge proportions survived the bleeding nose and puffed lip that resulted as five and a half drams of black powder (the gunmaker was a wise man and lessened the normal loads) made seven stone gasp and flinch. One morning, however, the huge hireling went off into a flock of curlew of which three remained behind on the shingle, to be gathered in the ecstasy of a joy never to be forgotten, and not since, I think, approached.

The main cause of the scarcity of curlew on the Les Marais beaches was probably the over-population of the island behind them. The curlew moves at sight of man sooner than other birds. Once I had a fine object-lesson of this. Coming over the crown of the downs (it was in Uist in the Hebrides) I saw along the length of a great bay below me a large quantity of fowl of various kinds. Quite close beside the tide edge were a flock of oyster-catchers and dunlins, beyond them a pair of great black-backed gulls; further, a number of sheldrake: and in the distance, by the other horn of the bay, a flock of about a hundred curlew. These were gathered on a rock

surrounded by the tide. In the water near this rock floated an eider duck with a family of three, and some cormorants. Such was the scene that a careful survey with the telescope disclosed. On my rising against the sky-line, the oyster-catchers, which were not a hundred yards away, were the first to fly—after them went the curlew, though a full mile distant. The black-backs let me come within a hundred and twenty yards, the sheldrake within three hundred. The only birds that I believe to be better able to take care of themselves than curlew are grey geese. They do not, it is true, fly when danger is as far off as do curlew; but their departure when the fowler is still 200 or 300 yards away is not (as is the curlew's at a mile) born of panic, but of reason—the sagacity of the super-bird. The goose is wise where the curlew is merely wild; yet this ultra-wildness renders the killing of curlew a matter of difficulty even when experience, knowledge of the ground and numbers are on the side of the 'gun.' Good bags with curlew are, of course, to be made; but success can never be guaranteed even to the limited extent which is possible with duck. I have known evenings when a single gun could have shot twenty curlew—once, when fighting, I killed ten in half an hour, and then stopped shooting because, combined with the morning's duck-shoot, we had as many birds as would supply the crofters.

Perhaps a drive is necessary in order to bring out to the full the possibilities of the curlew as marks for the gun, and when the birds come down wind there must be good shooting to fill the bag. But it will be more satisfactory to illustrate with a concrete instance.

In one of the Outer Hebrides there is a spot where an arm of the tides runs far up into the dunes. On one side of this arm lie saltings which are a favourite resort of curlew, especially at high tide, when the ocean-surrounded rocks that form their sanctuaries are covered. The tide flows into the bay by a narrow channel of swift water which has cut its way through the dunes so that its silver beaches abut on jagged cliffs of sand some fifty feet in height. On the other side of the water, under slopes of green turf, lie the large saltings I have described; behind them, on the summit of the cliffs, extend in their season many acres of stubble of barley and oats.

Here curlew congregate; indeed, by driving the beaches and saltings, and choosing the hour when the tide is nearly at the full so that the rocks in the bay are submerged, hundreds of curlew can be moved on to the stubbles. The driving must, of course, be carried on with knowledge, and the birds moved in a

skilful fashion from one feeding ground to another. The guns then take their places under the high cliffs of sand facing the stubbles and dunes, while two men, sent round very carefully, drive the curlew towards them. If this is gently and quietly done, the birds come in small companies and even singly, giving splendid shooting ; so that it is quite conceivable that the most favoured gun may fire twenty or even more shots. We never had much success when trying to drive curlew up-wind ; but with a gale behind them, which bore them forward and blew away the noise of the shooting in front, the sport was splendid. A few blue-rock pigeons often came over, as well as plover, both green and golden. The quickness with which the curlew turned on seeing the guns was remarkable. If one managed to shoot before the curlew discovered the presence of danger, the result was generally satisfactory ; but when the flock broke and scattered, the dip made by the birds in that act was as quick as the twist of a snipe.

Curlew cannot be driven often, for no birds sooner abandon a line of flight upon which they meet with persecution. Drive them the same way twice in one week, and the third time the bag will be exceedingly small ; it will probably consist of a single old bird which, as it were of contrariness, flies along a different line from his fellows.

Wild as curlew are, they occasionally give easy chances, and very occasionally they may be shot rising like snipe. Such opportunities occur when the gunner comes suddenly over the brow of a hill or rock ; but this reference specially applies to birds rising from tussocks, and more particularly from among potatoes. A rising curlew is rather a clumsy, flurried bird, and always exceedingly vociferous.

In the breeding season the curlew, then birds of the moors and the mountains, find a courage as remarkable as is their timidity at other seasons. Let the human intruder wander near the nests and the outraged parents will fly screaming about him, so near that their expostulation is deafening ; in this demonstration both sexes take part, for the cock is an excellent husband and bears his full share of domestic toil.

When curlew are feeding in a flock, they do not appear to make one of their number act as sentinel, as do wild geese, though sometimes a bird seems to sustain the part voluntarily ; but, on the other hand, a dozen curlew may often be seen all feeding at the same time—a state of things that would never be permitted among geese

or widgeon. Still, the curlew are so quick of sight and hearing, and so watchful by nature, that every member of the flock may be said to be a sentinel.

As far as my own experience goes, other birds dislike the neighbourhood of curlew. This does not refer to small waders, but rather to duck, geese and widgeon. Cormorants and curlew seem to be good friends, at least to the extent of frequenting the same rocks. Large flocks of curlew and green and golden plover feed close together, but do not actually mix to any great extent.

The curlew spends a good deal of his time during the autumn in the cornfields, where great sport may be had. Half a dozen painted wooden decoys and a secure and well-concealed hiding-place among the stooks are necessities, while the services of a ghillie who may be told to keep the birds moving in any distant haunt they are known to frequent, will always add to the number of shots obtained.

One summer evening I was watching for curlew with a couple of painted wooden decoys set up, when an old bird flew noiselessly up and settled within a yard or two of the decoys. It was some moments before he discovered that there was something wrong, but when he did he made off in a terrible state, continuing the shrillness of his clamour until he was out of hearing.

Curlew are birds of very regular habits, flying here and there at certain stages of the tide, and to a less extent at nightfall and dawn. It is when their favourite sea-feeding and resting grounds are uncovered about sunset that the full opportunity of the fowler comes. If he can hide himself behind some rock in their line of flight, he may shoot till his barrels are hot. Such a spot is to be found by a northern estuary where a sandbank is the nightly resort of thousands. This sandbank is uncovered within half an hour of the beginning of the ebb, and as it is some three parts of a mile out in the water the birds on it are not, after dusk, much disturbed even by the continued banging of a gun on the shore. The curlew flocks, moreover, fly down a long string of marshes bounded by dunes, so that the main flight is of necessity concentrated. Evening after evening I have there awaited the coming of the curlew. On the first occasion they arrived quite early, flying comparatively high, perhaps fifty or more feet above ground; on the second evening but few birds put in an appearance, but chancing to go out at a later hour I heard them calling on the sandbank. Therefore on the following night I remained longer. It was bright

starlight, but the birds did not begin to appear till half-past eight; but then for half an hour they were coming all the time, flying so low that it was impossible to see them against the dark background of rock and marsh. By changing my position and lying some yards down the side of the ridge I was able to get a momentary glimpse as they topped the sky-line ahead, and never have I enjoyed shooting more. A good many plover came with the curlew, and the bag which fell to a great deal of powder and shot was fourteen head. It might have been much more, but it was necessary to send the dog at once whenever I thought that a bird was down, and as the dog was as black as the shadows and the night, the low-flying curlew could not be shot till he returned.

But of all sport that has ever fallen to my lot with curlew, far and away the best (because the conditions presented difficulties that seemed at first sight insuperable) was on the great stretch of sand in St. Ouen's Bay, Jersey. Here were plenty of curlew, a bay some miles in length, a beautiful strand, and actually not a particle of cover. The tide recedes to a good distance, and lying with a glass among the dunes, the watcher may count large flocks feeding on the sand-hoppers and running on the edge of the water. A few efforts made at high tide, when stalking was possible from behind the dunes, were not altogether unproductive of result; but the absolute immunity which the curlew enjoyed upon the open expanses at other times gave birth to a strong desire to outwit them there.

So it came that one October day—when the sky and sea, the sun and gorse, made up the blue and gold colouring typical of the Channel Islands, and the hard sands were so white as to hurt the eye like the glare of a North African highway—I waited until the tide was nearly ebb, and then began to dig a series of pits in the sand about 200 yards apart, and each 100 yards nearer the shore than the last. Starting in the centre of the bay, I thus had a series of hiding-places to suit each stage of the incoming tide. The pits were rather inclined to hold more or less water, and at first the displaced sand was very obvious, but soon the sun bleached it to dry whiteness. An hour after the turn of the tide I occupied my first pit, while a companion went round and walked the beach towards me from the eastern end.

I have often thought that among the most delightful moments in the whole of one's shooting career are those when first one lies in ambush and contemplates the chances of success. Anyhow,

the memory of those moments in the shallow pit on that glorious day of blue and gold, with the autumn sun boring a hole into my back, have not passed away.

There were several flocks of curlew and the first of them rose while my companion was still a long way off, just as I had seen them rise a dozen times before my own advance. On and on they came, not ten feet above the sand, and sailed right up within range without suspicion. And then, as the two barrels went off, what a commotion, what a swerve out to sea ! The same thing happened with other flocks at some of the other pits. We drove them east and we drove them west ; a great day, and one which the unusual and almost sub-tropical weather marked out in unique relief.

There is a lot of fun to be had with curlew in a country of stone walls, where the birds are on the plough or in the turnips and potatoes. If the walls are high and their building solid, the stalk is easy ; but where they are storm-blown and tumble-down the skill of a true hunter is called forth.

I remember an occasion when a curlew feeding under such a wall proved too great a temptation to a schoolboy who was supposed to be shore-shooting along the tide edge of the Firth of Forth. In those days a great Headmaster used to permit shore-shooting to chosen boys of his great School. One day I was walking on the road to Aberlady when two bare-headed boys with guns came charging out from behind a hedge. One of them held a dead curlew in his hand. They began to run at full speed along the road, checked and had an argument, one pointing one way and one the other ; then they deliberately came up to me.

‘ I say, you won’t give us away ? ’ the spokesman said, panting. ‘ We’re going to hide behind that wall. The keeper’s after us. The Head. . . ’ He paused, thinking perhaps that he had given away too much to the casual stranger. We stayed, looking at each other.

‘ You’d better get behind the wall quickly,’ I said.

‘ Thanks awfully,’ came from two voices : and, with almost uncanny suddenness, I was alone in the road.

I strolled on a little, and soon heard the beat of rapid footsteps behind me, as a hard-featured old keeper ran up.

‘ Have you seen my two young gentlemen, sir ? ’ he asked.

Cunning man ! He wanted to give me the impression that the boys were under his charge and sent out to shoot with

him by his master. His cunning, however, made my answer the easier.

'I have not!' I said definitely—my last scruple, if ever I had one, gone.

'They run down this way. They were after my partridges, shooting into a covey from behind the dyke.'

We looked at each other, and I'll swear he reddened.

'This has been a very good partridge year up here?' I asked.

He stared. 'Not good nor bad.' There was something in his eye as he said this that told me how best I could serve the young sinners who were quaking within fifty yards behind the wall.

'Do you see many pintail about here?' I asked. 'I read in last week's *Field* that the Firth of Forth . . .'

But he thought I was delaying him on purpose.

'Good afternoon, sir, good afternoon,' he said testily, 'I must be getting on.' He walked till he was round the corner, and then I heard the plunk of his boots in the mud as he started again at the double. A few minutes later and the boys climbed over the wall.

'Thanks awfully,' they said again, and set off running in the opposite direction to that the keeper had taken.

I met them, by chance, later that evening, waiting for the same train. They greeted me shyly, but with evident friendship. I asked for news.

'It was all right. We didn't see him again. He's an awful liar,' one said. 'We never touched his rotten partridges. It was a curlew quite close to the wall. We crept up and. . . You see, we couldn't get near to them on the shore, and . . . and . . . It's a ripping bird, isn't it?' The boy had the bird wound up in his jersey. He produced it. 'I'm . . . we're going to have it stuffed,' he ended.

I never learned the boys' names, but I have sometimes wondered if either of them was an embryo Selous, and if somewhere a battered curlew on a stand may recall an early adventure and an escape from the tempestuous and roaring wrath of one of the greatest of Headmasters.

Many people debar themselves from curlew-shooting because the curlew, they say, is no bird for the table; and it is true that, while I have eaten some good curlew, others have needed the seasoning of hunger: but all through the Western Isles, where the greater part of my curlew-shooting has been done, the native relishes curlew almost as much as duck. He likes a cormorant better than either,

in which he approaches the standard of taste in vogue among the Eskimo, to whom the bird that enjoys a diet of fish or sea-lice forms flesh that most rejoices the palate of the squat *gourmet* of the Arctic.

Allied to the curlew are the whimbrels, both the common and the Eskimo. The latter is a very rare visitor ; but the former breeds in the Orkneys and Shetlands, and twice a year passes over these islands in migration. So regular is the date of its appearance that it is, as is well known, locally called the Maybird. A fact that I have never seen recorded is the occurrence of very large flocks in the Channel Islands, where it may be met on both autumn and spring migration. They suffer little at the hands of the fowler, in which they are more fortunate than the Eskimo curlew, which used to visit Labrador in vast flocks so regularly that their appearance was counted upon by both settlers and Eskimo. Nowadays the Eskimo curlew is practically unknown in Labrador. They are supposed to have been poisoned on their passage through the Southern States.

But to return to the true curlew, although he is more essentially, perhaps, than any other bird a denizen of the wild, yet sometimes he may be seen near the centres of civilisation. In the evening, flocks often fly by Ravelston Dykes over Edinburgh, and we may believe that Alan Breck heard them as he waited for David Balfour at Rest-and-be-Thankful, that spot which is nowadays the Mecca of the Writer to the Signet's Sunday constitutional. The curlew is not out of place there, nor out of the picture which includes the high Corstorphine Woods, as well as from another vantage-point, that view which drew out the word-picture : ' I saw all the country fall away before me down to the sea, and in the midst of this descent, on a long ridge, the City of Edinburgh smoking like a kiln and ships moving or lying anchored in the Firth.'

But the curlew occasionally appears in other places, at the heart of populous cities where one would scarcely expect to see him, or on wharf-surrounded expanses of black mud in the shadow of giant houses of merchandise. Once, near Glasgow, a single bird rose from a pool of slime in the vicinity of a huge gasometer—he rose and headed away for the Clyde ; let him reach it and pass over the tossing water, flying above giant liners until, far away, his sharp eyes discern the Kyles of Bute.

H. HESKETH PRICHARD.

THE POOR MAN'S LAWYER.

ALTHOUGH the species of social work which forms the subject of this paper has recently been brought before the public by the Cavendish and Agenda Clubs, the expression 'Poor Man's Lawyer' is not perhaps sufficiently well known to make an explanation of its meaning superfluous. 'Poor Man's Lawyer,' or, by abbreviation, 'P.M.L.', is the title claimed by a number of social workers equipped with more or less legal knowledge and training who endeavour to furnish free advice and assistance on matters connected with law to deserving applicants too poor to provide it for themselves.

The P.M.L. is, as a rule, a duly qualified barrister or solicitor who devotes one or more evenings in the week, after his work is finished, to endeavouring to perform this task at one of the various Social Settlements in the poorer parts of London. By preference he is gregarious and loves to sit as a committee. The advantages of plurality are obvious; responsibility lies less heavy on the shoulders of several than of one, and a division of labour greatly reduces the often considerable task of correspondence and legal research entailed. But the supply of jurisconsults is seldom equal to providing a committee. Where there are four P.M.L.s at a particular Settlement, each prepared to give one night a week, it is obviously better that the poor man should be able to consult an individual on four nights a week than a committee on only one, in spite of the advantages of the latter.

That part of the P.M.L.'s work which is most pleasant and most easy to perform efficiently consists in advising pure and simple, and it is satisfactory to be able to record that this class of work is increasing in volume. It is becoming more and more common, for instance, for a workman who has met with an accident to consult the P.M.L. as to what are his exact rights under the Workman's Compensation Act, 1906, and whether he would get more by proceeding under that Act or under the Employers' Liability Act or at Common Law.¹

¹ It is hardly necessary to say that he is almost invariably persuaded to have nothing to do with the two last-named remedies, if the Workman's Compensation Act is applicable, as it is obviously more to his advantage to get the regular weekly payment during the total period of disablement which that Act gives him than to obtain under the Employers' Liability Act or at Common Law a lump sum which he may be tempted to squander immediately.

Often, too, the member of a Friendly Society or Trade Union, or the contributor to a pension fund, comes with a copy of rules for interpretation ; or a ' party who takes in lodgers ' wants to know the best method of getting rid of them if undesirable ; or the purchaser of a midwifery practice asks how she can exercise her rights of restraining competition by her predecessor under the purchase-agreement.

Where hostilities have already begun, the work is not so simple or pleasant. A first attempt is made to obtain what the client demands by a more or less friendly letter to his opponent expressing a hope that he will help us to avoid litigation and a thorough readiness to hear his side of the case, but stating clearly that proceedings will be promptly commenced if the matter cannot otherwise be satisfactorily arranged. It is remarkable how often this initial letter has the desired effect. There is a certain magic in the note-paper on which it is written, stamped as it is with the address of a Settlement well known in the district as a solid, powerful, and beneficent institution ; and the memory of cases won in the past has given weight to the name of Poor Man's Lawyer. Sometimes the opponent may have only been deferring payment till he can see that the claimant means business ; the P.M.L.'s letter shows him that he does. Sometimes he may be only waiting till he can satisfy himself of the claimant's *bona fides*, or understand what is the true nature of the claim. For the uneducated, however genuine their cause of action may be, frequently approach their opponent with such an ostentation of cunning, caution, and unwillingness to accept thirteen pence for a shilling, that they would arouse suspicion in the breast of a two-months-old lamb ; frequently they are so incapable of expressing themselves intelligibly that their opponent is unable to make head or tail either of what is being demanded of him or of the right by which the demand is made. The P.M.L.'s letter enlightens him on these points and so often obtains what his client wants without more ado.

Where the initial demand fails, further correspondence of a sterner nature is entered upon ; and finally, if that fails too, proceedings are begun. This done, the client is encouraged to litigate in person wherever possible, and the ready courtesy and sympathy of most of the County Court Judges often renders this method successful. But where the case entails argument on a point of law, or contains some other inherent difficulty, or where the abnormal stupidity of the client prevents him from conducting it himself even

with the Judge's assistance, a resort is made to any funds from charitable sources which may be available and legal aid is provided at the smallest possible cost. If, as but too often happens, no money is obtainable, the case has reluctantly to be abandoned. I need hardly say that before taking any steps at all the P.M.L. satisfies himself that his client is in the right. Even where he can render no aid of a strictly legal description he can often perform a useful function by giving a sympathetic hearing and practical advice to those who wish to consult him, without unduly encroaching upon the ground of the parish clergyman.

Perhaps the best way of explaining the nature of the work accomplished will be to give a short account of a P.M.L. evening. The juriconsult, his diurnal labour or leisure ended, hurries East and hastily sets himself to devour the hybrid meal which forms a characteristic and apparently inevitable feature of all Social Settlements. After a few minutes' energetic eating, the aged and somewhat dingy janitor, whose face and functions alike have earned for him the name of Cerberus, calls us from the feast by announcing the arrival of a client.

Hastily gulping down the last drops of cocoa in our cup, with our mouth still full of stewed prunes and bread and butter, we rush into the reformed scullery which serves us as a legal dispensary. There stands a table laden with pens and paper, Stone's 'Justice's Manual,' Beven on 'Workman's Compensation,' 'The Annual County Court Practice,' Shirley's 'Leading Cases,' etc., etc. On one side is the juriconsult's own seat, and facing it across the table, in another chair, sits, mouthing, an old woman in a great state of malevolent excitement. Her face suggests Ayesha after the horrible transformation, and her hands recall those of the more elderly of Mr. Arthur Rackham's hobgoblins.

She plunges at once *in medias res*: 'It's them girls. It's all along o' them cheeking me so. They ought to be ashamed of themselves.' 'Slander, or possibly assault,' one thinks; but laborious cross-examination discloses that the proposed cause of action is of quite another nature. 'Them girls' are her nieces, the daughters of a deceased brother who had been a publican at Norwood. He had always told her that a Mr. Hozier of Ropely Farm, near which they spent their childhood, had told him that he would leave in his will £3000 to be divided between brother and sister. She is sure that her brother must have got the money and kept it all for himself. She had not cared for it before, but now that her nieces are so inso-

lent, she will get the money out of them and have them put in prison for keeping it. When Mr. Hozier died she knows not, nor where Ropely Farm is situated except that she thinks it is somewhere south of London. It is always pleasant to be reminded of George Eliot, but that is not the purpose for which we have come East ; so we cast as much cold water as we civilly can on Ayesha's hopes both of wealth and vengeance, and finally get rid of her by promising to find out anything we can about Mr. Hozier's will. Subsequent inquiries reveal the fact that without doubt neither she nor her brother was ever entitled to a penny under that document.

'Next, please!' shouts Cerberus, and in steps a neat and pretty little seamstress. In the tailor's shop in which she was formerly employed an enterprising spirit among her fellow-workers has organised what was called a 'One Pound Club,' The scheme was that each girl should weekly pay one shilling to the organiser as treasurer and that each week one girl (to be selected by lot before the commencement of the payments) should have the right to draw out a sovereign. Thus the girl who drew No. 1 would draw out £1 after paying only one shilling, but would have to make nineteen successive payments afterwards ; while the girl who drew No. 20 would go on paying her weekly shilling until after twenty weeks she would be allowed to draw her 20s. out again ; a savings-bank with a pleasing element of uncertainty added to it. Unfortunately, after eight weeks' payment a strike ensued and scattered the girls far and wide. The treasurer took with her the funds and though she acknowledged her obligation to repay the money paid in, refused to do so on the somewhat irrelevant ground of poverty. Two fulminating letters from the P.M.L. brought the money back in instalments.

Next come two Workman's Compensation cases. In the one a boy employed as scullion in a cheap restaurant had cut his hand on the broken handle of a potato-peeling machine and the wound had festered. The employers refused compensation on the ground that the boy knew the handle was broken and that by the use of care he could have avoided the injury. A letter pointing out that this, even if true, is immaterial under the Act, soon brings them to their senses. In the other, an elderly and comparatively refined Irishwoman, who for some mysterious reason had sunk to be maid-of-all-work in a Jewish restaurant in Whitechapel, upon injuring her knee had been dismissed and refused compensation on the ground of the alleged casual nature of her employment. Here

the P.M.L.'s letter exposing the various fallacies involved in this contention and threatening proceedings procures not only compensation but renewed employment on recovery.

The next applicant for advice is a fat, alcohol-sodden woman in a man's shepherd's plaid cap, with silver bangles pinching her bare red wrists. Her husband had been out of work in England and a lady had paid his passage to Canada ; he was now out of work there too, and wanted to come back, but couldn't pay his return passage. Could she by law get the money out of the lady who paid his passage out ? No ? Well then she should send her children to the workhouse, and a good riddance, and out she flings and bangs the door.

Then come two costermongers, who bought some scrap-iron and old shop-fittings from a firm not far from Covent Garden on Thursday. They spent Friday in breaking their purchase up and getting it ready to take away, were told to come to remove it not on Saturday but on Monday, hired a large cart and horse for that purpose at 7s. 6d., and on turning up on Monday were told that in the meantime the stuff had been sold to a higher bidder. Here correspondence proved futile ; the unscrupulous tradesmen would not believe that litigation would really be within their opponents' reach and determined to brazen it out. Eventually the costermongers were instructed how to conduct their own case in the County Court, which they were perfectly capable of doing. One of them, indeed, had only too rich a flow of natural rhetoric and logic, and had to be urged to prune his flowers of speech a little, and to remember to let the Judge get in a word here and there.

Next comes a man whose little girl had been knocked down and bruised by a motor bus. Having ascertained, as far as we can, that the driver really was to blame, we send a letter to the Bus Company couched in moderate terms, which quickly brings in the amount of the doctor's bill and a reasonable solatium for shock and torn clothes.

Lastly appear two women who want 'separation orders.' The first, when closely questioned, can charge her husband with nothing more serious than bad language, occasional bouts of drunkenness, and one or two night-long absences at some place unknown. She is told that at present she has no case which would entitle her to a separation. The other has more substantial grounds of complaint, and she is instructed how to make her application and what points to emphasise in telling her tale to the magistrate.

And so ends an evening in which none of the cases encountered are in any way out of the ordinary. Occasionally the P.M.L. is faced with really intricate legal puzzles, and sometimes he hears stories replete with all the elements of romance or melodrama ; but the former would probably only interest the reader mildly, while to reveal the latter might constitute an indiscretion ; besides this, what is wanted is to give an idea of the ordinary work of the P.M.L., even at the risk of dullness, and not an anthology of curiosities culled from his experience.

The only unusual thing about the evening described is that it afforded throughout such very plain sailing. If all the problems encountered were as easily solved as those narrated, the organisations already in existence would be almost sufficient and practically the only improvement required would be an increase in the number of workers. But frequently cases present themselves which cannot be disposed of without litigation and which the client himself cannot conduct in person, either on account of infancy, inadequate intelligence, or deafness, or because some point of law has to be argued. In these circumstances, as things stand at present, if no money is forthcoming from any source it is exceedingly difficult to take further steps. It is true that many very charitable solicitors exist and there are many generous barristers who are ready to hold a brief without receiving a fee. Moreover, contrary to the general opinion, there is no professional rule which prevents them from doing so. But it is at present very unusual for legal work to be done gratuitously ; and the P.M.L. is naturally very reluctant to trade upon the generosity of his professional friends. At any rate to do so often would be to kill the goose which lays the golden eggs ; and so, only too frequently (especially if the issue is in the least degree uncertain), the case has reluctantly to be abandoned.

It is therefore manifest that there is need for some scheme by which the present state of affairs can be improved upon. We have come to look upon it as a matter of course that the poor man should be provided with gratuitous medical assistance if duly qualified persons are ready to offer it ; why should he not also have gratuitous legal aid when he needs it, especially as the latter could be provided at about the thousandth part of the cost of the former ? Nor would the gain be all on one side. Besides their primary object the hospitals also serve the very useful secondary purpose of assisting the training and education of the medical practitioner,

and in the same way it would be much to the advantage of the budding barrister if he too could have the benefit of what might be called a legal hospital system. It is but too well known that every dusty chamber in the Temple contains at least one potential Cicero or Hortensius eating his heart out for the chance of a display of his forensic pyrotechnics. Moreover his opportunities are getting rarer and rarer; formerly every barrister in considerable practice used as a matter of course to 'devil' his cases in the County Court—*i.e.* get a younger and less busy man to take them for him—when ever they clashed with another more important professional engagement. Now he dare not do so; if he is not certain that he will be there to conduct the case himself the solicitor insists on the brief being returned, so that he himself can dispose of it to someone whom he or the lay client is anxious to feed. It is thus becoming increasingly difficult for the tiro at the Bar to get any practice at conducting a case in court unless he himself has outside interest.

Obviously, therefore, he would jump at the chance of pleading the poor man's cause gratuitously. Here then we have one party with a commodity which he is very anxious to dispose of and another who badly needs it. Surely, by all the rules of Political Economy, they ought to be brought in touch with each other and it should only be a question of how this can best be effected. I would propose some such scheme as the following.

There should be a Central Office at which is kept a rota of the names of all barristers willing to conduct P.M.L. cases in Court gratuitously. For the reasons already given, it is quite certain that the list could readily be made a very long one by a notice sent round the Inns of Court requesting all who cared to, to send in applications to be enrolled on it.

The list would then be worked through alphabetically. If Aeschines could not take a case on a particular day he would miss his turn, which would automatically pass to Brougham; the next case would go to Cicero, the next to Demosthenes, the next to Erskine, and so on till the circle worked round to Aeschines again. In all probability no young barrister on the list would have more than two cases a year, but he would be very glad of even this amount of practice at getting on to his legs in Court; and, if business of his own intervened, his place would be taken by the next on the list. In this manner the work required to be done by the Bar would be easily provided for.

How to supply those services which can only be performed by a solicitor presents a somewhat more difficult problem. What would be aimed at would be a rota of solicitors managed on the same lines as that of the barristers; but such a list would, I fear, be greatly more difficult to fill. Lack of work is of considerably rarer occurrence among solicitors than in the sister branch of the profession, as the new recruit generally makes a direct entry into an office where work already exists; and a busy practitioner cannot be expected as a matter of course to sacrifice his valuable time to the unpaid service of the poor. However, no great amount of solicitor's work would ever be entailed in P.M.L. cases. The facts are, as a rule, the essence of simplicity, and these with the law would be got up by the P.M.L. himself, who would personally confer with and instruct the barrister who is to conduct the case. Thus the solicitor would be spared all the task of getting up the brief (which need only be a 'back-sheet') and his labours would be confined to lending the machinery of his office for the performance of such tasks as serving writs, subpoenaing witnesses, watching County Court Lists, etc., etc. There are seldom many, if any, witnesses in a P.M.L. case besides the litigant himself, and the 'taking of proofs'—a luxury and not a necessity—could almost invariably be dispensed with. Repayment of out-of-pocket expenses would be guaranteed from the fund which will be dealt with later, and it is possible that the authorities would countenance some arrangement by which the solicitor would, if the case was successful, receive a moderate sum for remuneration, to be paid as costs by the unsuccessful opponent. If a sufficient number of solicitors sent in their names, the turn of individuals would only come round at long intervals. In the circumstances, it surely would not be unduly optimistic to hope that a reasonable number of solicitors would send in their names as ready to allow their clerks occasionally to perform the services in question, especially if the scheme received the sanction of the Law Society.

A central P.M.L. office would have to be established which would control the rotas and to which the P.M.L.s for the various Settlements would apply for legal assistance, if they had duly satisfied themselves that the particular case in question could not otherwise be satisfactorily dealt with. The application once made, the Central Office would automatically allot solicitor and counsel to the case. The cost of this office would be extremely small. Only a very exiguous staff would be required, and it is possible that some such organisation as the Cavendish Club would lend a room for

the purpose gratuitously. Failing this, the required accommodation could be procured at a very low rent.

But, however small would be the expense thus incurred, some regularly organised fund would be necessary to cope with it. Again, as litigation would almost invariably be in the County Court, the disbursements for Court fees, etc., would be very small and would as a rule, together with any small out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the solicitor, be eventually repaid by the other side. But the necessary sum would have to be put down by someone in the first instance; and, where the client himself is too penniless even for this, the necessity for some regular fund upon which to draw would again manifest itself. A fund would therefore be indispensable; but, as has already been shown, the expenses would be small, and there ought to be no difficulty in meeting the financial problem either by annual subscription or by collecting sufficient capital for a permanent endowment.

It may be objected against the proposed organisation that the possibility of a free use or misuse of the machinery of the Courts would encourage a quarrelsome and litigious spirit among the poor. But this danger would be met by the P.M.L. himself, who never takes up a case unless he is satisfied that his client is in the right—that is to say, that he has merits as well as law on his side.¹

I have no wish whatever to claim originality for the scheme above outlined. As has already been said, the whole subject has recently been before the Cavendish Club, and it is more than probable that very similar proposals may have been placed before it by one or more of its members. I am, moreover, well aware that only the roughest and most impressionist of outlines have been given. The main work of developing the scheme still remains to be done by filling in the details, and no doubt many alterations could be made which would vastly improve it. Perhaps the difficulties would be better met by a scheme totally different from that suggested. The present writer holds no brief for any particular proposal; and his sole object is to show that, useful as is the work done at present by the P.M.L., he needs some solid organisation upon which to fall back in cases where the means within his control are insufficient to procure his client his rights; if definite shape has been given to

¹ The present proposals after all merely involve the extension of a principle which has already obtained the sanction of the powers that be, by the institution of *in forma pauperis* procedure, which would be an excellent thing were it more widely known, and more easily set in motion.

the suggestions made, the main object in doing so has been to show that possibilities, and not castles in the air, are being discussed.

To institute and perfect such an organisation will need a man of influence, energy and ability. Should this paper induce any such philanthropist to give the matter his serious consideration, it will have more than fulfilled the most sanguine expectations of the writer.

Since this article was completed the General Council of the Bar has considered certain proposed New Rules for the assistance of Poor Litigants and has passed resolutions—

- (1) Sanctioning the gratuitous assistance of poor litigants by barristers.
- (2) Advocating the establishment of a public fund to meet the expenses involved in connexion with documents, witnesses, etc., and
- (3) Advocating the application of the Poor Prisoners' Defence Act system for the selection of Counsel and Solicitors to the case of Poor Litigants.

A. F. SCHUSTER.

THE MAJOR AND THE MEMBER.

THE Major and the subaltern sat beside a little fire of wood. The flame ebbing and flowing made their spurs sparkle, and alternately lit and shadowed their faces; overhead a million millions of stars shone frostily down, while a young moon was sinking in the West. A hundred horses, picketed in double line, were eating with a comfortable sound of mastication the piles of dried grass that lay before them; and behind them lay the saddles in orderly row, with the lances stuck in the ground and standing out dimly and slimly against the star light.

Men stood in groups beside half-a-dozen fires, warming brown hands and extending cold booted feet to the blaze. Two goats hung from a tree and were being dressed by self-appointed butchers, whose knives glittered in the firelight. Near by a man was blowing the embers which glowed in the scooped-out fireplace beneath a huge gridiron, while a couple more were manipulating into flat unleavened cakes great lumps of heavy dough, and placing them in turn upon the grid.

The Major stirred the fire with the toe of his boot, and the resulting flare lit up his face and that of his companion.

'I bet anything,' said the Major, 'that some of these agitating fellows have been getting at this village. I have never known the people make trouble before about finding supplies for a regiment, let alone a squadron. They are uncommonly glad as a rule to get a little ready money, poor devils.'

'I was here myself last spring,' said the other, 'and they brought a great deal more than we wanted, and were very civil indeed. The head man was rather a decent old boy, but he seems to have gone now. I wonder what's the matter with them?'

'Some one has been getting at them, I bet anything. The new head man was downright insolent, and I shall report him. Mind you don't lose those receipts for the payments; I expect he will say we did not pay for what we had.'

The challenge of a sentry interrupted them.

'Haltoocumdar'—which means 'Halt! Who comes there?'

'What do you want?' replied an angry voice; 'where's your officer?'

'Hullo, who's that?' exclaimed the Major. 'Go and see who it is, Charles, and ask him to come to dinner.'

He glanced at the hanging goats as he spoke, and saw that dismemberment was now in progress.

'Pity we did not bring something from the mess after all,' replied the subaltern, as he walked off in the direction of the sentry.

Turning the corner of the horse-lines he hurried towards a group that was gathered near the 'guard.' A loud and angry English voice broke again on his astonished ear, and as he ran forward he caught fragments of heated talk.

'What do you mean by stopping me? I want to speak to the Officer . . . What? I don't understand your language. Why don't you speak English? You are a Sergeant, aren't you, with all those stripes on your arm? Eh?'

The Sikh non-commissioned Officer of the Guard who had come to the sentry's assistance was as much nonplussed as the Englishman, and he turned with relief to the Subaltern.

'This Sahib wishes to see you,' he said in Hindustani; 'I do not understand what he says, but he says continually, "Afsar, Afsar."'

The stranger surveyed the Subaltern with disgust; he had understood that there was a British officer in the camp, and before him stood a turbaned person whom in the darkness he took to be another native.

'I hope to goodness you understand English?' he said, rather crossly. 'I want to see your officer. This infernal sentry-chap will not let me pass.'

'Quite right, too,' answered the subaltern. 'That's what he is there for, to stop unauthorised strangers, you know. Who are you? And what can I do for you?'

'I have just told you that I want your officer. Please call him.'

'Well,' replied the subaltern, 'I am an officer myself, if it comes to that. But my Major is over there.'

'You an officer?' ejaculated the stranger in surprise; 'why I thought you were another native.'

'Very likely,' said the other indifferently; 'probably it's my hat makes you think that. But you had better come over and see the Major; he is over there.'

He nodded rather vaguely across the darkness.

'Over where?' asked the other. 'Perhaps you had better ask him to come to me here.'

The subaltern gazed at him in surprise. Dimly lighted by the non-commissioned officer's lantern, a small man with a blue jowl stood before him; he wore a large solar topee, and the expression of his face so far as it could be seen beneath this big hat was far from amiable.

'Oh, no, certainly not,' said the subaltern, in reply to this last remark; 'the Major has had a pretty long day already. If you want to see him you will have to come with me. And if you will excuse me for saying so, you had better talk politely to him, for the Major's rather a stiff chap when he is sick.'

'Do you mean that he is ill? Nothing infectious, is it?'

'Oh, dear no; I meant that he gets stuffy when he loses his shirt.'

'Look here, young man,' said the stranger rudely, 'you seem to be having a joke with me. First you say your officer is ill; then you tell me that he has lost his underclothing. Now that won't do; I have taken the trouble to come here on a matter of importance, and I am not to be put off with that kind of talk.'

The subaltern looked at him in astonishment; he was feeling very much annoyed, for he, too, had had a long day and he was hungry as well as tired. But he curbed the rough speech that rose to his lips.

'I have told you as plainly as I can,' he said with laboured patience, 'that the Major gets angry when he's annoyed. And if you talk to him as you have talked to me he certainly will be annoyed.'

A distant shout from the Major reached their ears.

'What are you jawing about over there, Charles? Bring the chap along with you.'

The subaltern turned on his heel.

'Come on,' he said with as much politeness as he could muster.

The oddly-assorted pair made their way back to the officers' fire; the Major rose as they approached.

'Good evening,' he said; 'I'm afraid we can't offer you much hospitality; but dinner, such as it is, will be here pretty soon, I expect.'

'Thanks, I have dined,' said the stranger shortly. 'May I ask if you are officer in command here?'

'Yes, I am. And this is Mr. Lambert, of my regiment. My name is Matheson.'

'I,' said the stranger, pausing on the word as if to lend emphasis to what was to follow it, 'am called Luxford, Member of Parliament for the Shortwich Division.'

'Ah, indeed,' said the Major. 'Very glad to meet you. Won't you sit down? I am afraid there isn't a chair, but here is some straw.'

'I will not sit down, thanks,' said Mr. Luxford. 'I am stopping the night at the rest-house in the village, and a complaint has been made to me about the manner in which you have extorted supplies for your party from the villagers.'

'Well?' said the Major. The subaltern smiled to himself, for he recognised the tone of the Major's voice.

'The headman of the village came to me, bringing the local schoolmaster to act as interpreter, and he told me that you had demanded and actually forced him to provide flour and meat, and corn and hay. I wish to know what explanation you have to offer.'

The Major sat down on a bundle of straw and again stirred the fire with his boot.

'Charles,' he said, 'you had better remove this chap and put him out of camp. I don't like to do it myself, or I should kick him from here to the village.'

The subaltern, fatigue falling from him like a cast cloak, advanced smiling.

'You silly ass,' he said, 'I told you that you had better be civil. Come along.'

The stranger was furious.

'If you lay a finger on me I will prosecute you for assault,' he said.

'Oh, cheese it,' answered the subaltern, laying a heavy hand upon him.

'Wait a bit, Charles,' said the Major. 'Look here, Mr. Luxford, I don't know much about the law, but I rather fancy that you have laid yourself open to a summons for using

language calculated to provoke a breach of the peace. I think that is what it's called.'

'And as it happens,' said the subaltern, 'I particularly warned you to mind your manners. If you go on like this, you will never get back to the House of Commons.'

Mr. Luxford modified his manner somewhat.

'There is no use in our losing our tempers,' he said, with an effort; 'I should like to talk this matter out with you. I feel that it is my duty to see it through, as a simple matter of justice to the natives. I am sorry if I was rude.'

'Well,' said the Major in mollified tones, 'you will perhaps excuse me for saying that you were rude, very rude indeed. If you take that tone again I shall have to leave you to the tender mercies of Charles—of Mr. Lambert.'

The Major smiled; so did Mr. Lambert.

'And,' continued the former, 'I had better tell you at once that you must not try to come between me and these villagers. If you think that I have maltreated them, your course is to report me to the Deputy Commissioner of the district; his name is Jeffreys, and he lives at Malpur. But don't, please, take that tone again with me. Mr. Lambert will tell you that I have a perfectly beastly temper—haven't I, Charles?'

'It is pretty thick at times, Major. But he hardly ever swears.'

The latter somewhat irrelevant sentence was addressed to Mr. Luxford, who wore the air of one who is a prey to astonishment.

'Of course,' said the Major, 'being an M.P.—you did say M.P., didn't you—you are a stranger to the country, and so can hardly be expected to know much about things out here.'

'I am hardly a stranger to India,' broke in the M.P., 'for I have been out here for four months.'

He spoke as one who had said the last word, and the subaltern smiled.

'That is not a very great deal of time,' the Major replied. 'But it is nearly enough to teach you that things are not always what they seem or are said to be in India. But never mind; you must really not interfere in my business, or at least if you wish to do so, you must do it via the Deputy Commissioner. Charles, write down the D.C.'s name and address and give it to Mr. Luxford.'

The subaltern extracted a ponderous army pocket-book from his haversack, and making an entry tore out the leaf and handed it to Mr. Luxford. The latter held it so that the fire-light fell upon it and read what was written.

'Thanks,' he said, 'that is quite clear. I am afraid I shall have to report the matter. I need hardly say, Major, that I had sifted it thoroughly before I came to you about it and—'

'Oh, all right,' answered the Major. 'Please don't say any more about it. Write to Jeffreys. I don't know him myself, so he will be quite unbiassed. And now that that is settled, won't you have a drink?'

'Thanks, I am an abstainer,' Luxford replied.

'That's all right,' said the subaltern; 'we are on the tack, too, for the next few days. But we can give you some hot milk, I expect—goat's milk, if you don't mind that.'

'What is it like?' asked Mr. Luxford.

He was rather cold, and the prospect of hot milk was alluring; but he jibbed slightly at the idea of its source.

'Oh, it's all right; especially if you put some sugar in it to take off the taste.'

At this moment three soldiers approached, bearing food.

The foremost carried with great care two chupatties, one in each hand, upon which were piled small heaps of meat. Untempting meat, Mr. Luxford thought. The second man bore a quantity of chupatties, and the third an earthen jar full of hot milk.

'Here is food, Sahib,' said the first man. 'We have brought goat-brains and chupatties. It is not like the food of the officers' mess, but be pleased to eat it.'

He and his companions beamed upon the officers as hosts smile upon their guests, and noticing Mr. Luxford, one asked if the other Sahib would like food also. The Major said that the Sahib had already eaten and dismissed the food-bearers with polite thanks. They saluted and vanished in the darkness.

The subaltern produced a couple of tin tumblers, and filling one with the milk gave it to Luxford.

'It probably is sweetened already,' he said, and considerably forebore to add that a soldier had very likely stirred in the sugar with his forefinger.

'Excuse our eating,' said the Major; 'we have had very

little since breakfast, and we are pretty hungry. At least I am, and I suppose you are, too, Charles?'

'Deuce of a twist,' said the latter, as he fell upon the goat's brains and leathery chupatti.

Luxford watched them eating in astonishment. He would never have believed that officers of the British Army could consent to devour goat's brains at any time, still less when served in such an untempting fashion. Being himself full-fed he was inclined to be disgusted.

'By gad,' said the subaltern with his mouth full, 'I am mighty hungry.'

'This milk is really delicious,' said Luxford, cherishing the tin tumbler in both hands. 'I had no idea that goat's milk was so good.'

'Depends how much you want it,' said the subaltern with laconic indistinctness.

'Well, I certainly was wanting it very much,' answered Luxford.

'I am very glad that we could do that much for you,' said the Major, whose sense of hospitality had now overcome his wrath. 'But really, of course, you are making yourself *particeps criminis* in our extortions. But never mind; I'll not mention that to the Deputy Commissioner. Have some more, do.'

Luxford hesitated, but the spirit was stronger than the flesh, and he declined with many thanks.

'I must be going,' he said; 'I suppose you won't both come and breakfast with me to-morrow, will you, at the rest-house?'

'Thanks very much; we should like to,' said the Major; 'that is, if you will give it us pretty early. We ought to march at 8 o'clock.'

The time was agreed upon, and the two officers escorted Luxford from camp and put him on the track to the village. After leaving them he was nearly ridden down by a camel-orderly, whose mount emerged from the darkness with the lurching, silent, suddenness characteristic of the beast. The camel-orderly had come from cantonments and had brought, amongst other correspondence, the English mail for the officers. Taking their letters they began to read them by the light of the fire, newly stoked for the purpose.

'By George if that isn't a funny thing,' said the Major presently.

'What?' asked the subaltern, looking up from a letter which, judging by his seraphic smile, must have been written by some feminine charmer overseas.

'Talk about coincidences,' said the Major.

'What about 'em?'

'Why, here's a letter from a friend of mine at home, mentioning a globe-trotting M.P. called Luxford—that was the chap's name, wasn't it?—and asking me to be kind to him—says he is somewhere in our part of India.'

'That's a darned rum start. Well, you have been kind to him, Major; at least I have. It was my glass the little beast drank out of. Still, it licks cock-fighting all the same.'

'This is what he says: "If you meet a travelling M.P. called Luxford, you might do what you can for him. He is rather an ass, but not at all a bad fellow when you get to know him. He has gone out to learn something about India and means to stay out for six months. The last time I heard from him he said he was going somewhere near where you are. He is a Radical and is great on the woes and injustices from which India suffers, but please be kind to him if you possibly can."'

'Little beast,' ejaculated the subaltern.

'Upon my word,' said the Major, 'when I come to think of it I really am surprised at my own forbearance. I didn't think I had it in me. However, perhaps it is just as well. Anyway, you won't have to eat cold goat at breakfast to-morrow, Charles.'

After which they rolled themselves in their blankets, snuggled down in their straw, and fell fast asleep.

Next morning Mr. Luxford received his guests in the living-room of the Public Works Department Rest-House. He evidently believed in travelling comfortably, for a quantity of baggage strewed the room and the table was covered with a fair white cloth upon which, looking absurdly out of place to the two soldiers, the silver gleamed in the bright morning sun.

The host was at first a little constrained in manner, reflecting probably upon the brutalities of his two guests and upon their somewhat cavalier treatment of himself on the previous evening. But memory of hot goat's milk forbade rancour, and he was as

cordial as he knew how to be in his greetings. When the Major told him of the letter that he had received, Luxford's surprise was equalled only by his pleasure, and the clouds of their previous interview were soon swept away, so that the traveller felt quite guilty when he thought of the slip of paper which reposed in his pocket, and upon which were inscribed the name and address of the Deputy Commissioner. He intended fully to use this slip of paper, and to forward a report as soon as possible.

It was the Major who referred to the subject of their previous unpleasantness, and he did so over a really surprisingly excellent meal.

'Now that I know who you are, Mr. Luxford,' he said, 'I don't mind talking to you on the subject about which you came to see me last night.'

'I shall be delighted to discuss it with you, Major,' answered the other.

'Well,' replied the Major, 'I own I was annoyed with you last night. You know you were a total stranger to me, and I considered your interference was an impert—was unwarranted. However, I shall be very glad if you will let me know what you have to say.'

The Major's tone was more cordial than his words, but Luxford nevertheless had the feeling that he it was, and not the Major, who was in the position of defendant. The subaltern's contribution to the conversation was confined to an amused smile.

'Well, you know,' said Luxford, 'I am on my way from Buchapur to the house of a native friend of mine, a lawyer who has a place at Hansgunge. Soon after I got here the head man came and complained about you, as I told you. I tell you quite candidly, Major, that I thought it very wrong indeed that an Englishman at the head of a body of soldiery should forcibly, or at all events by threats, extort from these poor villagers supplies which they can hardly afford to part with.'

The subaltern cackled with laughter, and the Major frowned at him.

'I beg your pardon; I'm awfully sorry,' said the former to Luxford.

'Is your lawyer-friend called Mulraj?' asked the Major.

'That's the very man; do you know him?'

'I don't know him, but I know of him,' said the Major; 'I suppose he knew you were halting here?'

'Oh, yes; his brother was waiting for me when I got here, but he went off directly after.'

'Well, you really must report me to the Deputy Commissioner,' rejoined the Major, 'and in the meantime you shall hear my version. But even if you agree with it, which you probably will not do, you must report me just the same in order to see whether the Deputy Commissioner takes my view or not. I expect you will find that he will do so. However, your friend Mulraj is a seditious rascal.'

'Oh, not seditious; he seeks for a liberated India, but he is anything but seditious.'

'Call him what you like, he is exceedingly hostile to the Government, and a brother of his—I don't know whether it is the one you saw yesterday—has been in prison for sedition. Mulraj himself was pretty strongly suspected, but he got off somehow. But his one idea is to do anything possible to get the Government disliked, and if you will allow me to say so, a travelling M.P., Labour for choice and Radical for next best, is just the sort of man he and his sort like to get hold of. He is going to fill you up with all sorts of lies, and I am afraid you will believe most of them.'

Mr. Luxford bridled, but the Major continued.

'His brother doubtless saw us march in, and being a cute lad he got hold of the headman and told him to refuse us supplies, with further instructions to complain to you afterwards. Of course you know that an M.P. is considered by all natives to be of immense importance. As a matter of fact, we brought a lot of our supplies with us, but we had to supplement here, and Mulraj's brother and the headman knew very well that one method of bringing Government into contempt is to refuse to help troops. Further, if they can make a complaint that supplies were extorted by force there is another point in their favour. They know pretty well that the Deputy Commissioner will not believe for a moment that I used force to get what I wanted, but they did expect that you would believe it, and that you would kick up a row. Not that you could effect much out here. Still, if when you got home you could say something in the House about the brutality of soldiers and the callous indifference of

civilian officials, why it would look mighty well from their point of view. Do you see?'

Luxford nodded with polite acquiescence.

'Now I was not going to be sat on,' continued the Major, 'by any insolent headman, nor let him brag that he got the better of some Sahibs. That sort of thing does not do at all. And as it happens I know that this village can always find a certain amount of supplies, for we have been here before. Moreover, the village people are uncommonly glad to sell them and to make a little ready money. Ready money is pretty scarce with them, I can tell you. So I told the headman that if he did not find what I wanted within half an hour it would be the worse for him. The supplies were brought in twenty-five minutes, and were paid for on the nail. Perhaps your friend the headman said that they had not been paid for?'

'No, he did not say that,' answered Luxford; 'but he did say that you had not paid the proper amount.'

'Well, you must put that in your report, too,' said the Major, 'for they were paid for by the authorised schedule of prices current. But I am afraid that it is the headman who will get into trouble, not I. May I have another kidney?'

Mr. Luxford helped him with a cordial hand.

'And now,' said the Major, smiling, 'I am going to carry the war into the enemy's country. It was the kidneys that reminded me. May I ask if you carry all your supplies with you; I mean your meat and that kind of thing?'

'Oh, no,' replied Luxford; 'surely meat would not keep, would it? Antonio, my servant, always manages it for me.'

'Well,' said the Major, 'you must forgive me for criticising this excellent breakfast that you have given us. These kidneys now: how many kidneys are there to a sheep, or to a goat?'

Luxford replied to this indelicate question that he thought each animal was endowed with two.

'In that case,' said the Major, 'these kidneys must have been the product of four sheep or goats. Probably goats. But the chops, they are certainly mutton—not goat.'

'Oh, I hope so,' said Luxford, devoutly.

'Certainly they are mutton, and well-fed mutton, too. Did you happen to see a butcher's shop in the village?'

'No, I did not notice one,' answered Luxford, wondering to what these questions tended.

'It would be funny if you had, for there is not one. Small villages like this do not as a rule have a butcher; the people are too poor to eat meat, and, moreover, you never see a flock of sheep, only goats.'

'What about the quails?' put in the subaltern, who was at that moment scrunching the leg of one. 'There are practically no quail about here, but you have managed to raise a dozen. It is jolly good of you, of course.'

'All this is dreadfully rude,' said the Major apologetically; 'but I want to do something still worse. I want to ask your servant how he managed to get all this. Will you allow me to do so?'

'Certainly,' said Luxford. 'Antonio! Antonio! come here.'

'Yes, sar,' cried a voice; and there entered a black-faced Goanese 'boy,' who described himself as a Portuguese, and like all his kind spoke English.

'Antonio,' said the Major, 'did the people of the village make any difficulty about providing what your Sahib wanted?'

'Oh, no, sar! They very willing. I tell them master very great man, master Member of Parliament, and make bobbery if he did not get all he want.'

'But how did you get all those kidneys?'

'I make headman take goats, but I pay only for kidneys, not for all goats. People are angree, but I say master very great man.'

'But the mutton, Antonio—how did you get that? There are no sheep here, are there?'

'Yes, sar, there was one big sheep here. A dumba, what you call fat-tailed sheep. I say master like chops of fat-tailed sheep. The man say he is pet sheep and love him much, but I tell him not to be dam fool or master make trouble.'

The subaltern's smile was growing wider and wider.

'And what about the quails?'

'They fighting quails, sar,' said Antonio simply. 'Many people here keep fighting quails; like cock-fight, sar. Master love quails, so I take one quail from twelve men. They very angree and give abuse, but I say master send policeman if he not get them. Then they give quails gladlee, sar.'

Mr. Luxford glared speechlessly at his capable attendant.

'Really,' said the Major mercilessly. 'I think you are

worse than us. The intimidation that you have used has been most reprehensible, Mr. Luxford.'

'But, my dear Major,' gasped the injured gentleman; 'how was I to know what that rascal was doing?'

'Surely you are responsible for the actions of your servant. I consider it a gross scandal that you did not bother yourself to enquire into his methods. Just think of it. Four goats slaughtered to provide kidneys for your breakfast table, and only the kidneys, not the whole goats, paid for. Twelve honest men robbed each of a precious fighting quail, and probably paid a penny or twopence for a bird worth several rupees. And, worst of all, a poor fellow deprived of his one fat-tailed ewe lamb, the joy of his household, that you may eat chops. It is terrible.'

'And you a bally M.P.,' said the subaltern. 'I shall write to *Truth*.'

'I don't want to rub it in,' said the Major; 'you did it largely for our sakes, and we thank you.'

He laughed, and even Mr. Luxford smiled ruefully.

'It certainly is pretty dreadful—I suppose that is what has happened whenever I have travelled in country districts.'

'Certainly,' said the Major. 'But we must be off. We are late already, and that is another crime to be set down to your account. You must come and stay with us at Than-danagar—we shall be back there in a week. You will come, won't you?'

'Yes, rather,' said the Subaltern; 'you must come. We will tell the fellows in Mess about you, and they'll give you a top-hole time.'

Mr. Luxford gasped a little.

'Can I dare come?' he said in a faint voice.

'Of course you can,' said the Major and the subaltern together.

SCOTO-INDIAN.

JOHN SMITH AT HARROW.

THE first time that I saw John Smith was at my father's house. He had come there to take clerical duty in the holidays. I was then a little boy, but I perfectly remember his tall spare figure as he stood in the hall, unwrapping the grey Scotch plaid, which he always wore in lieu of greatcoat. It was a bitter January afternoon, and the half-hour's drive from the station had been all against the wind. His face was blue with cold and his fingers were freezing; but his only answer to my mother's expressions of sympathy was to repeat over and over again 'Dear lady, it is most remarkable weather—most remarkable.' Only once was his voice raised in complaint; a fire had been lighted in his bedroom, and all luxury offended him. My mother said afterwards that it really seemed to pain him deeply that such an ordinary piece of consideration should have been possible.

That day was the beginning of a long friendship; for he made much of us children, and even wrote to us when he had gone back to Harrow. I wish I had kept those characteristic letters; but my chief interest at the time was in the exquisite maps that he sent me, done by boys in his form, and the little morocco-bound school-roll, which represented such a bundle of romantic possibilities. There never was anyone, we thought, so easy to make friends with, or so ready to be shown things, as Mr. John Smith. He had an adventure too (as it seemed to us) in our house. On my father's return he and his guest sat late alone in the drawing-room, and my father in a fit of absence of mind locked the outer door when he went to bed. John Smith actually slept on the rug sooner than disturb the house at that hour. Next morning the housemaid, when she came to open the room, was astonished to see his tall figure rising from the rug, and to hear his voice repeating in its peculiarly insistent tones that 'he had had a marvellous night's rest, and had slept gloriously,' though the cold that winter was very severe.

With my mother he soon became very intimate, for they had much in common. His parting words to her on his departure to Harrow were 'Lady, you have brought into the world five little

gentlemen; you must teach them three things: to love their mother, to speak the truth, and to believe in another world.'

During his stay, the village was astounded to hear that the strange clergyman was out at five in the morning learning shoe-making from the village cobbler. He wanted to realise, I suppose, as far as possible, what a workman's life is like. It was also noticed that his visits were chiefly to the cottages of the most notorious evil-doers, and that even there he was welcome. There was something about him that would take no denial. My mother asked him whether he had been to see the 'old Halls,' the pattern old folk, during her absence. 'Not much,' he answered "except when I needed some lesson in faith. I thought I could help poor Job Withers more.'

Long after he had gone the village people remembered him, his queer ways and kindly speech, and how the little rise in the middle of the terrace-walk troubled him as he walked up and down. The terrace-walk was altered, but he never came to see us again, and the next time that we met was in 1873, when I went to Harrow. The boys told me that it was 'old John,' who took us in 'pupe,' and in 'old John' I recognised the friend of my youth.

Let me try to describe him as he sat at the high desk in 'pupil-room.' His hair was white, and gave him a venerable appearance, which it was his humour to cultivate. He liked to talk of himself as an 'old, old man,' though at the time he could not have been much more than fifty. Underneath his bushy eyebrows were a pair of the kindest eyes ever to be seen in a human face, and his broad brow had a peculiarly saintly quality, entirely redeeming the long upper lip and heavy jaw, which might have disfigured any less spiritual countenance. Another noticeable feature was his hands, with which he was forever pointing and making signs. They were white and well shaped; and his fingers were provided with very large filbert nails, which he tended with scrupulous care.

It was part of his teaching that such things as keeping your nails clean were as much a part of a boy's duty in the sight of God as other and more generally recognised virtues. So he acted up to his doctrine by setting a good example in such matters himself. He was never to be seen in the smallest way untidy; his dress and linen were most scrupulously clean and neat. And his voice—it is difficult to describe, though he talked like no one else. It sounded as if he generally spoke under the influence of some high enthusiasm. It had a mouthing quality, which

made everything he said emphatic without being in the least unreal. His obvious simplicity and sincerity put affectation out of the question. He was also a precisian in speaking, and sounded his final consonants in a way that did, alas! at one time make his reading at prayers ludicrous. He appealed to me about it: 'Laddie, what is it makes the dear fellows laugh so, when I read?' and there were tears in his voice. Shame on me that I never told him of the absurdity of those final t's and p's—why, I cannot imagine; but that was years after my first entrance into pupil-room.

There were some twenty or thirty boys who sat with him in pupil-room for preparation; the senior boys did their work upstairs in their own rooms. To all these boys he taught the fear of God, as part of the daily round. Heaven was to him so near that the word was forever in his mouth. When a boy carelessly left the door open, he would point to it and say 'Shut the door, lad; doors are not left open in heaven.'

Idleness he could not abide. On one occasion, wearied with a boy's persistent excuse that he had finished his work and therefore had nothing more to do, he flashed out 'Nothing to do, laddie? Say a prayer, then; you can always say a prayer.'

I can imagine that at stories like these some of my readers who think that they know schoolboys will smile with incredulous pity. If John Smith really talked like that, they are sure that the boys could have had but little respect for him; assuredly they laughed at him in their sleeves if not openly. And yet it is certain that they did not do so. Things that 'John' had said were detailed through the school and repeated with humorous relish; his eccentric mode of speech was imitated, but it was not in the spirit of mockery, but with affectionate enjoyment of his quaint humour.

He also taught us respect for our work. Whatever it might be, it must be shown up with the utmost neatness and precision. The intrinsic excellence of the work, I verily believe, took with him a second place. If a boy brought up a finished exercise to show that his form work was done, he would say 'Copy it out again, dear lad; those terrible corrections spoil everything.' As for help in our work, lazy boys soon found out that he was not to be relied upon for assistance at critical moments. Whether it was that he really did not trust himself to answer all questions (it was part of his extraordinary humility to pretend to no knowledge outside his ordinary beat) or that he thought it better to make us persevere by refusing help, I do not know. Certainly his answer to many

inquiries was 'Dear lad, I fear it is too hard for an old man like me; take it back to your place and try again.' When the question was one of mathematics, and the boy could obviously make no way without help, he would say 'Ah, laddie, I know nothing of these marvellous things. You must take it to one of those wonderful fellows upstairs,' and the boy would go knocking at sixth-form doors for assistance. His attitude of mind in all these matters was exactly opposite to that of most masters. He pretended to no intellectual superiority but sought to stimulate us by confessing himself as puzzled by similar difficulties. He was full of admiration for the high gifts of knowledge and wisdom in others, but took no credit for anything of the kind himself.

At the same time, with all his simplicity he was not easily imposed upon, as he sometimes gave his pupils plainly to understand. For example, one evening he attacked a well-known sporting character in the house with the request to be informed what horse was first favourite for the Derby. The boy, thinking that innocent ignorance would be the most telling pose, stammered out, amid general amusement, 'I don't know, sir.'

'Then, laddie, you must be more foolish than I thought. Find out the name: every Englishman ought to know it: and write it out one hundred times.'

But to real ignorance and stupidity he was very pitiful. When he took pupil-room once a week in English subjects, he used to walk about the room, leaving one of the boys to mark the answers, and do his best to extract such knowledge as every boy possessed. 'Black M— yes! White R— yes! and the little thing called H— yes! Mark these men; mark them all; 'and then, putting his fingers on the head of the fourth, a slow fellow, who never got anything right, he would say 'Poor old S—! poor old thing!' and as he waited for an answer, press his hand down so hard that his long sharp nails became painful. But that was his way of showing sympathy, so it did not occur to S— or anyone else to mind it.

His hatred of dirt and untidiness made him swift to notice personal defects of the kind in us. On such occasions he would say 'Show your hands, laddie; those are not divinely pure. Away and cleanse them!' Similarly with our exercises. We might not be able to do them right, but we could show them up neatly; and therefore it was a part of every boy's duty in the sight of God to do so. Copies of verses shown up to him personally in pupil-room had to be faultless in this respect, or they were torn up.

And the rule which he applied as far as possible to our work in preparation became absolute in his own form. He always took the first fourth at Harrow, which was the third form from the bottom of the school. Other masters were promoted as time went on, but John Smith thought he could do the best work where he was, and no doubt he was right. Young boys could have had no better master nor more valuable training. His discipline, the habits of neatness and accuracy which he insisted upon, must have been invaluable to the small lower-school boys under his care. As a boy he had been devoted to Scott's 'Marmion,' and his favourite exercise for his form was to make them write abstracts of the different cantos of the poem. What struggles the copying and recopying of those 'Marmion' abstracts cost the careless boys of the first fourth can be imagined. Though I was never in his form myself, I can well remember being called into council by a friend as to how he could best conceal a necessary erasure in his exercise. My part only consisted in certain delicate operations with a pocket-knife, but my friend's intense anxiety during the process showed me with what reverence he had learned to regard his written work. On completion he surveyed my efforts with a gloomy and despondent stare, and said 'It's no use; he'll be sure to see it, I know,' and no doubt John's eagle eye detected the erasure next morning.

His manner with his form was paternal, and characterised by the same quaint humour. But it was not safe to presume in any way upon that kindness. The legend was that on one occasion a new boy to the form ventured to try a fall with his master, and that 'John' arose majestic, and thundered out 'Marvellously funny, laddie, but rather impertinent; you go straight to the dear Doctor, and when you come back it will be all quite different.' At any signs of lying or cheating in a boy, his anger was terrible. The way in which his blue eye flashed, as he hissed out 'Miserable creature!' (his most stringent term of abuse) was sufficient to scare the most hardened criminal.

As a rule, however, he was not unduly swift to punish, nor pitiless in his dealings even with deliberate offenders, though he knew how to set long punishments—'Glorious discipline for thee, laddie!'—or even to put a boy into the 'great extra,' when it was deserved. A house-master once asked him to take strong measures with a new boy in his house who was thoroughly idle and unsatisfactory. John said 'No; be patient with him; it is his first term; when he comes back (with a crescendo of emphasis)

I'll set him lines ; I'll punish him ; I'll send him up, and have him flogged, for I love the lad.'

He knew also how to use persuasion ; it is on record that he got a neat exercise out of a hopelessly untidy boy by saying to him 'Will you do it for my sake, dear thing?' and then when the motive proved sufficient went on to say 'Could you not do one better still for Christ's sake?' The fact that he was able to say such things to boys without exposing himself to mockery shows how great was his power over them.

Unpunctuality in form he punished sharply. On one day in the week, Tuesday I think it was, he stood watch in hand at the door, and woe be to any sluggard who found it shut. The penalty on that day was seven hundred lines. On any other day in the week boys who were late had to come up at seven in the morning, and wait in the road opposite his lodging till a gaunt arm waved across the window showed that they had been noticed and might go. He rose habitually himself at six o'clock or a little after, but was never seen before schooltime at half-past seven. 'We older people, you see, have so much to pray about,' he said once in apology to a boy who wondered why he 'took so long dressing.' That these long prayers were no perfunctory ceremony is shown by the confession made in after years that he had been in the habit of praying for every boy in the school separately by name once a week. For this purpose he had arranged a routine of forms, beginning with the sixth on Sunday, and ending with the third form on Saturday night.

But his form had its privileges as well as its punishments : privileges of service, dear to the heart of boys as everyone knows. Certain boys called 'monitors' were appointed to take the bill-books¹ round to the different masters. Another series provided pen, pencil, matches, india rubber, etc., for his personal use. It was a piece of 'John's' humour to appoint also deputies in case one of them should 'die in the night.'

In the summer term he gave a 'swimming school'—that is to say, took the whole form personally down to 'Ducker' in school-time, on condition that at least ten boys could be found to dive from the highest board. It was most comical to hear 'John' exhorting his flock in quaintly humoured speech, and urging the last of the shivering boys on to this deed of daring. 'See how all those wonderful fellows have gone head first before you ; jump, laddie ; feet first if you can't the other way. There's no shrinking in

¹ Books containing the names of those absent from call-overs.

heaven.' Every boy in his form had to take to the water, and swim or try to swim to his satisfaction.

As for his power of school discipline, that was equally unquestioned. In my time it was the habit to hold bill (school call-over) on wet days in 'fourth-form room' instead of the open air. As a rule the boys passed in single file before the master in charge to answer their names, so that when they were packed into a room so small as to make the usual method impossible, a more or less disorderly scene was the invariable result. Few masters in the school could maintain proper decorum, but John Smith was one of them. I remember as a new boy going up to 'bill' with a friend, and hearing him express annoyance that it was to be held inside, which generally meant delay and discomfort. Then, as the white head came in sight: 'Oh no; it'll be all right; here's old John.' I remember the orderliness of the room, and a kind of stern tension in the precise tones of the voice calling, which kept disorderly spirits in control without direct reproof. Years afterwards in St. Luke's he told the secret of his power. Such a detail might be deemed too intimate for publication, were it not an essential part of his unique nature. 'Do I remember calling "bill"? Yes, indeed, that was my hardest trial. I never ventured it without a quarter of an hour spent on my knees. How often in the fields have I knelt down by the hedgerow, and prayed God that I might not fail in my duty.'

The inscription on Cardinal Newman's tomb, '*Ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem*,' expressed the course of this world in sober reality to John Smith. He saw the people about him, boys and masters, 'like trees walking,' encompassed with a golden mist which disguised their homely features, and made their smallest achievements to him wonderful. There was never a trace of affectation in the ready appreciation which he bestowed upon all our schoolboy efforts. Anything new, beautiful, or ingenious was sure to be regarded with the delighted wonder of a child. Many boys found a particular interest in perfecting some mechanical toy or piece of primitive art because it would please 'old John,' and it is amusing to remember the quasi-patronising air with which these creations were submitted to his notice.

For the 'glorious' Doctor he reserved especial reverence. He always declared that he owed much of his life's best effort to the stimulus of his example, and spoke with awe and enthusiasm of his intellectual power. I remember having a talk with him on the subject one day coming down from fourth school. It was a frequent

habit of his to lay a heavy hand on someone's shoulder with the words 'Would you give an old, old man an arm, dear lad?' when he wanted a companion. It was part of his innocent affectation of old age that on these occasions he leant so heavily on his supporter that the boy had much ado to keep his balance. Old age did not, however, prevent 'John' from darting rapidly away in the intervals of conversation to bestow a casual half-crown upon any of his regular pensioners whom he met.

This evening he had a request to make: 'Dear fellow, it must be wonderful for you to hear every day the translations of the glorious Doctor. I should very much like to see some of them. Do you think you could take some down for me?'

I professed my willingness, and some days after offered to read him a few passages from the 'Agamemnon' which I had written out.

'Thanks, dear lad,' he said; 'it is not now necessary. The marvellous Doctor has done it for me himself. I told him how great a privilege I should esteem it to hear his translations, and he took me into his study, and gave me half an hour of the utmost delight.'

A strangely humoured picture, take it how you will—John Smith with hand outstretched beating time to the poetic cadences, and the Doctor translating away with all his might to give the simple man pleasure. On the one side childlike sincerity, on the other an insight which could appraise the great qualities of such a character at their true value. For if John Smith held his headmaster in particular reverence, on the other hand that headmaster placed the utmost confidence in his judgment in matters concerning boys, and many important reforms in school order came from his suggestion. He never attended masters' meetings, which were held once a week. His irritable brain would not permit of the excitement of the discussions so late in the evening, but he was often consulted in private before important decisions were made.

A curious proof of the perpetual strain involved in this brain weakness is given in a letter, written to the house-master who was afterwards in charge of the house where John had been. John is pleading for the practice which he had introduced of reading books at dinner time. One volume at least he thinks might be allowed to each boy! 'For myself, I could not have got through dinner, with my irritable brain, unless perfect silence had been maintained. And I could not expect boys to keep silence unless they had something to think about;' and all the while he was carving with fierce 'indiscriminative' knife (as an old head of the house puts it), with which it was impossible for anyone else to keep pace. The senior

boy, who dispensed sweets at the other end of the table, tried to match him but in vain. John smiled a wintry smile at the attempt. These developments of spasmodic energy in the performance of daily duty tell their own tale of suffering.

I have said that this world lay for him shrouded in a golden mist; on the other hand, the world beyond the grave shone miraculously clear in the light of his great faith. Death was robbed of all its terrors; to be regarded only as a happy release from trouble into the wider liberties of a new and more glorious existence.

‘Have you ever been to Scotland, sir?’

‘No, lad; it is the first place I hope to go to when I am dead.’

‘If you reach heaven before me, dear fellow, keep me a flower. I think I should like a rose best.’

After a school cricket-match, when the school was rejoicing over its success, to a member of the eleven: ‘Do you not think there will be cricket in heaven?’

Once, with a queer smile, to a boy standing at a second-floor window: ‘Why should we not jump out, dear lad? We should be in heaven in a moment.’¹

One Sunday evening when he was in charge of the house during the temporary absence of the house-master, he addressed the boys very earnestly at the beginning of prayers in the following words. They are remarkable for the touch of poetry which often gave impressiveness to his sermons and table-talk.

‘As I pass along these wind-swept passages at night, and going into your rooms, see there your sleeping forms, and beside your beds your clothes unfolded or strewn upon the floor, I think to myself, Would the dear Lord be pleased if He came to fetch a boy in his sleep to-night, and found that he had left his things in such disorder? Will you do me the favour in future to fold up your clothes, and leave them ready on your chairs?’ And on Monday came the sequel, overheard in the very words here written. ‘I say, what do you think?’—it was a little lower-school boy speaking. ‘Last night of course I left my clothes about as usual. In came old John. He called my name, but I didn’t let on that I was awake. So he took up the things, folded them, and put them on the chair himself. Of course he thought I was asleep, but I think it was rather a chouse; so I suppose I shall have to fold up my own after this.’

¹ For obvious reasons, I have been tempted to omit this last saying; but though entirely exceptional, it is on good authority and must therefore stand with the rest.

And once death did actually come to the school, during the time of house prayers. It was a most dramatic scene. John knew that a boy lay very ill in one of the houses, and had already prayed for him. He was concluding with the Lord's Prayer, when suddenly the penetrating sound of the high-pitched school bell was heard in the distance—Ding! John stopped. There was dead silence for some moments. Then again the bell came—Ding! There could be no doubt; it was the passing-bell, and John's voice broke out into a pæan of thanksgiving, without one touch of earthly grief or sentiment to mar it.

'We thank Thee, O Father, for Thy great goodness that Thou hast taken this dear lad home to Thy glorious heaven: we praise Thee—' But it is impossible now to recall the cadence of the triumphal strain which sprang so spontaneously from the well-spring of his great faith. The house rose from its knees profoundly affected and filed out in silence.

Heaven was indeed to him very near. It was not a hope but an ever-present reality which made him love light as its earthly symbol. When he went round the rooms on Sunday night, it was the habit of boys to collect pieces of candle to aid the dim illumination of the two 'tollies' provided by the house authorities. Then John, when he opened the door and was met with this blaze of light, would say 'Dear lads, this is like heaven. I love to see everything so bright,' and we, astonishing as it may seem to those who never fell under the spell of the man's personality, were pleased to know that we had pleased him, and never dreamed of mocking at his quaint humour. Indeed sometimes our enthusiasm in his service outran our discretion, and John has been known to say 'Thank you, laddies. It is glorious, quite divine; but it hurts the eyes rather, doesn't it?' So we had to modify the illumination next week. Of course our rooms had to be tidied up and put in exquisite order for his visit. In particular he liked to see the jugs on our washing-stands (Harrow boys sleep in their rooms) wrapped in clean towels, and put properly in their basins 'like John the Baptist's head in a charger, laddie.' A few flowers too were much appreciated; for if John tried to make us ready for the next world, he did not forget that we should be human in this. An example of this vein of humanity in him is given in the following story told by a boy who was a member of the cricket eleven and a great friend of John Smith's.

'I had given him a photograph of myself in Eton collars at thirteen, and on my way back from a Pinner walk many years

afterwards took the opportunity of telling him that I had now got a much better photograph than that old thing, taken when I came. This photograph, when produced, represented a gorgeous person in a white waistcoat with "eleven" buttons, flower in buttonhole, &c. John looked at it thoughtfully, and then gave it back to me, saying "No thank you, dear fellow. I prefer the old one."

Even in those busy Harrow days, John Smith engaged in other unselfish labours outside his school work. A man needed only to be poor, miserable, or wicked to claim his immediate sympathy. His charities were unceasing. I have heard of his walking about a whole half-holiday afternoon with a poor labourer trying to find him employment. He has been seen helping a drunken man home in the streets of Harrow. Above all, a certain idle rascal, whom Harrovians knew as 'Bottles,' was the frequent object of his pitiful kindness. He had a tender feeling for him as a bit of human wreckage, a man who had never had a chance. Whether he was successful in effecting any reform in him I cannot tell, but the invincible optimism, which made sure of a happy outcome for all in the end, came out in his talks with the man.

'Ah, Bottles, dear man, how you will suffer in the next world before you come round; but it will be all right—in the end it will all come right.'

But these were all trifles by the way, like the half-crowns which he dealt out promiscuously to all who appealed to him for help; so freely indeed that, as the brain-clouds thickened towards the end, he had to be protected from the rogues, who tried only too successfully to impose upon his benevolence. He had also a scheme of regularly organised philanthropy which filled all his spare time. In the holidays he usually took the work of some parish, preferably in London, to enable some poor clergyman to get away for a holiday. 'It is a great privilege,' he would say, 'to get some experience of the marvellous work those glorious fellows do for the poor.'

In the same spirit he laid out the three half-holidays of the Harrow week in a routine of active charity. Tuesday he spent in the gaols, Thursday among the poor, and on Saturday he went over to Pinner to read to his mother and sister, for whom he had made a home there. Boys often met him striding along the Pinner road on this mission, and it is amusing to remember, in view of his affectation of old age, that they gave him credit on these occasions for something over four miles an hour.

He did not go into society at all. Although no professed ascetic,

life did not seem to him to give room for such occupation ; perhaps he felt unequal to it. Indeed he excused himself to the wife of a Harrow master once on the plea that the excitement might lead him to drink too much wine ! His sole indulgence was to go to Westminster Abbey for afternoon service. He was intensely alive to the glamour of its associations, and delighted in the music ; but once in the year was enough. Even his meals he took alone, except when he presided over the house dinner in place of the house-master. Nevertheless he was always willing and anxious to go to visit his friends when they were sick or in trouble. Once after chapel he was summoned to the deathbed of a lady with whom he had some acquaintance. He strode hastily up the hill as if he were the bearer of great good tidings, mounted the stairs eagerly, and entering the sick-room took both the dying hands in his own, saying in tones of unmistakable feeling ' Dear lady, I congratulate you.' Another saying of the same kind is to be found in a letter written by him to an old Harrovian who had just lost his wife in sad circumstances. John Smith writes ' And who will look after the children during the mother's temporary absence ? '

He was seldom severe, but if he saw clearly that any of his colleagues was mistaken or in the wrong, he felt it his duty to point it out to him in the most outspoken manner ; and the soundness of his judgment in matters of literary taste, as well as of everyday morals, is beyond question. When there was cause for it, he was capable of a high degree of righteous indignation, as the following scene shows. John came into the room when a young master was telling the tale of an accident that had happened on the London Hill. A cart too heavily laden had overpowered the horse, which in an endeavour to run away fell underneath the cart. Its hind quarters were crushed or paralysed by the weight of the load, and it remained on the ground helplessly struggling and plainly in great pain. John listened carefully to the tale, interpolating an eager little interrogative Yes ? Yes ? Yes ? till it came to an end. On the speaker pausing he said ' Yes, and then ? ' But there was no more to tell, so the speaker said lamely ' That's all.' Then with a characteristic stiffening of lip and limb, which he always used when strongly moved, and pointing his forefinger at him, John said ' What, sir ! Do you mean to tell me that you did not at once go to the nearest police-station, and take measures to see that the poor dumb animal was quickly put out of its pain ? '

There was no answer ; but the scene between the two masters

was so impressive that it never faded from the memory of a boy who was present.

Such was John Smith in his Harrow years, when I knew him : a master whose work was as valuable to the school from an educational point of view as that of any member of the staff, and whose moral influence was unique : a man whose life was an eternal protest against evil and idleness. 'I never see that man,' said an old Harrovian once to my mother, 'without thinking that I must give up my hunting and shooting and life of amusement, and turn to some good work. No other man produces on me the same effect.' We little knew that in those Harrow days under that kindly manner there raged a perpetual struggle which made him look to death as the only release. From the enemy which was ever present in his own unstable brain he could find no refuge but in a routine of ceaseless labour. The threat of madness had disappointed his youthful hopes. He looked forward to it as the inevitable end to his career, and accepted his fate without repining when it came. It may be said that his outlook on life was never thoroughly sane. Maybe; but we might thank God for more such madmen. He was always mad enough to be utterly forgetful of his own interests, eager to spend and be spent in the ceaseless service of others. He was mad enough to be utterly fearless in what he said to those with whom he had to do ; transparently sincere in a world of pretence, and above all things utterly humble. It was to his humble attitude of mind that he chiefly owed his power with boys. Dim tales were told of the strange things he had said in those secret talks which he had with nearly every boy who came to the school. How he accused himself of every kind of folly and wickedness. Like Bunyan, he would declare himself to have been the greatest of sinners. Doubtless such tales are the outcome of that spiritual imagination which magnifies the memory of past offences, as the sense of forgiveness grows stronger. We only felt that they were part of John's curious way, which we did not always understand ; our instinct refused to believe ill report of him. Also I think we recognised in them the wish to make fellowship with us in our weakness and sin, as well as in our higher hopes and ideals. And the result of this way of his was that boys opened their hearts to him more freely than to most masters, and then his great faith came to the rescue. He could say and do things that no one else could dare, for in all that he said or did we boys knew that there was no shadow of pretence or affectation.

When he died, he left no memorial behind him ; his sermons, some of which were very remarkable, he had deliberately destroyed long before. The generations of boys that knew him are passing away, and even at Harrow he will soon be little more than a name. But in the hearts of those who did know him well he holds a unique position, and will not be soon forgotten. Even now it requires little effort to recall that characteristic figure. Tall to gauntness he stands before us, leaning forward with a curiously rigid bend from the hips, as he puts his questions. His coat is carefully brushed, his clerical tie perfectly tied, his standing collars the picture of neatness ; and yet he is plainly one who cares little for the things of this world, and maybe his coat would prove threadbare if you looked closer. How his eyes gleam with whimsical kindness as he surveys the boys before him, or leans back to await their answer, while the light from the high pupil-room windows plays among his crisp grey locks and over his broad forehead ! As his pointing finger passes down the line, ' Little Edward—Cornishman—smallest thing in all the world,' and a dozen other quaint nicknames of his own invention come back in the tones of his humorous speech, while boyish faces flicker up out of the gloom.

Or again the scene changes, and you see the same figure, the same except for the plaid thrown about the shoulders in Scotch fashion, trudging up Harrow Hill. The road is heavy with melting snow, but he walks with the same striding gait as of old, only the bag is heavy, and he is not so strong as he was. ' Let me carry your bag for you,' says a passing master. ' No, no,' is the answer. ' When I was young, I was ashamed to be seen carrying a bag for my mother, so you must let me carry this for myself now.'

So all his life long he carried his heavy burden himself, and many years ago he received his reward.

E. D. RENDALL.

If any old Harrovians have letters of John Smith's, or can furnish other reminiscences or characteristic sayings of his, I should be very glad to hear of them at Briar's Patch, Godalming.—E. D. R.

*AT CANTERBURY AND AMIENS WITH JOHN
RUSKIN.*

ON the wall of the room where this article is written, two frames containing drawings hang very close to each other. The first contains two very delicate pencil drawings; one representing part of the great perpendicular tower of Canterbury Cathedral; the other, some of the canopy work of the South Porch. Both studies show a remarkable feeling for architectural detail, and are drawn with great care and delicacy.

The other frame contains a slight pencil drawing, which is touched here and there with white, and is on grey paper; with little apparent effort the effect is given of the vast mass of the Cathedral of Amiens reflected in the water; with a few rapid strokes the wide curve of the river bank is indicated, and the groups of people on the shore.

These drawings are by the same hand—the delicate, sensitive hand of John Ruskin; but between the dates inscribed on them lies an interval of nearly fifty years. The Canterbury drawings belong to the period of his boyhood, when he was passing through the ancient city on one of his journeys with his father and mother, and were given by him to friends in Canterbury in the year 1880. He has written, in pencil, under the drawing of the Cathedral Tower, ‘J. Ruskin. Canterbury. 1832. My first as ever was—study of architecture. Dated January 15th, 1880.’

Of these drawings he says, in a letter to Miss Fanny Gale, his hostess in Canterbury, ‘and do you like these little absurd drawings then?’

Before his first visit he wrote to her nieces, of whom the present writer is one, ‘I am wanting much to be at Canterbury, where I hope to hear much about St. Augustine and to be, in every way, impressed and improved.’

In another letter he writes, ‘Of course you must both come to take care of me at Canterbury, or I shall be too seriously impressed, I am sure, and shall make an Augustine monk of myself or something of that sort.’

After his first visit he wrote, ‘I am sure I came away from Canterbury more softly hearted to all the world from having been so petted by the aunts and you.’

These boyish drawings have in them the promise of all the

beautiful, delicate architectural work to be executed, by the same hand, in after years.

The slight sketch of the Cathedral of Amiens, drawn nearly fifty years later, is the work of a master, able to express very quickly, and with few strokes, what would have cost him much time and labour in the past. This drawing also was given by him to his friends in Canterbury, some of whom were with him at Amiens, watching him as he drew it.

In the same house are several other interesting Ruskin drawings, but it is only with the drawings of Canterbury and Amiens that we are now concerned.

His visits to Canterbury gave him very great pleasure; he loved to sit and write at a window from which he could command a view of the great central tower of the Cathedral, and of its grey walls and roofs, and could see gardens and green lawns, and great trees and old houses; but in spite of the beauty of the view of the Cathedral, in its green setting, Canterbury had many disappointments for him. He never was quite satisfied with the interior of any English Cathedral; he found, in them all, too much vergerism, and a great deal too much restoration. Such figures, for instance, as those placed in the old niches of the South Porch could not but excite his wrath. The carving of the present Choir Stalls was in progress during his first visit to Canterbury, and he found the work meaningless and lifeless, and he was struck by the indifference of the workmen when he talked to them about their work. He asked one man if the animal he was carving was a bear or a dog; the answer was, 'I don't know.' The Professor said, 'I suppose it is a case of you pays your money and you takes your choice.'

He surprised a stationer in Mercery Lane, close to the Cathedral, who offered him photographs of the vast building, by saying, in a very sad tone, 'There is no Canterbury Cathedral now.' Of course he really found a great deal to admire in the magnificent Cathedral, and he had a special love for the tomb of the Black Prince, and for the beautiful old glass of the Becket windows, and he declared the carved wooden canopy over Archbishop Kemp's tomb to be the finest he had ever seen. Happily for his peace of mind he saw the Chapter House sad and grey and desolate, but not overlaid with coats of garish paint, and with its old irregular stone pavement replaced by quite uninteresting wooden flooring.

The distant view of the Cathedral that pleased him the most was from Harbledown Hill—the 'Bob-up-and-down' of Chaucer—

where it is seen as a foreshortened mass. He stood on the edge of a ploughed field, and made a drawing of this view. He loved walks and drives in the peaceful Kentish country, in late October sunshine. The ascent of St. Martin's Hill he called 'a sweet slope'; and he liked the old Kentish cottages and farm-houses. His pleasure in the celebrated view from St. Martin's Churchyard, so much extolled by Dean Stanley, was spoilt for him, by the sight of the very ugly buildings of the jail.

On his last visit to Canterbury he was on his way to Amiens, to work at those chapters 'Our Fathers have told Us' to which he gave the name of 'The Bible of Amiens.' It was interesting, when he started, to note his freedom from the ordinary cares of the traveller, and the way he was able to discourse on the reasons of the fall of Venice till the carriage came in which he was to drive to Dover. He invited the writer of these pages, with a sister and brother, to join him at Amiens, and perhaps to go on to Paris with him. Needless to say the invitation was eagerly accepted, and, at the end of the journey, after crossing the Channel in a wild, late October hurricane, it was delightful to be welcomed by the beloved Professor at the door of a comfortable old French inn. He hoped we were not longing for the gaiety of a *table d'hôte*, as he always dined in his own sitting-room; but he promised to take us to the theatre after dinner.

Another guest was added to the party the next day; and our kind host made the visit delightful to us all. It is needless to describe the Cathedral; has not John Ruskin written of it himself in the pages of 'The Bible of Amiens'? But we, who were with him there, feel that no written words can equal the beauty of his spoken words, when he led us, all unworthy as we were, before the sculptured figures of the great portals of the Cathedral of Amiens, and interpreted to us their message. He explained to us how the Latin Vulgate—the form in which the Bible was given to Christendom by St. Jerome—was interpreted to the people by means of Art, by sculptured stone, and carved wood, and painted glass, and finally, by painted canvas.

With Amiens as an example he showed us how, in a medieval Cathedral, the whole Bible History was set forth from Adam to Christ, and not Bible History alone; for the Gothic builders appear to have tried to put clearly before the eyes of the ignorant and unlearned multitude, the whole of knowledge, human and divine. They set forth the mysteries of Death and Judgment, the learning

of the Schoolmen, the lives of great Saints, and the emblems of arts and sciences and even the ordinary daily life of the people.

The simple peasant of Picardy, coming in from his fields to some great festival of the Cathedral, might feel too awe-struck to enter the great portals, when he saw himself confronted, before he crossed the threshold, by the Lord Himself—'le beau Christ d'Amiens,' by the great company of Saints and Apostles and Prophets, by Madonna and the angels and star-led Kings, but he would feel that there was a place for him when he saw the representations of the labours of his daily life, with which he and his forefathers had been familiar for generations—the sowing, the reaping, the gathering of the grapes, even the killing and curing of the pigs. He would see also the Signs of the Zodiac, which, besides being tokens of science too high for him, would also be understood by him as the signs of the familiar changes of the seasons. The Professor explained how this same teaching is set forth in medieval literature, in the pages of the '*Divina Commedia*' as well as in the sculptures of Amiens, or the mosaics of St. Mark's at Venice. It is curious what a close analogy can be drawn between the subjects set forth in a Gothic Cathedral and in the writings of Dante. He only follows the teaching of the Catholic Church in taking Virgil as his guide to Heavenly Wisdom; for does not the Church class the Cumæan Sibyl with David in the hymns of her liturgy, and exalt her and her sisterhood with the prophets on the walls of her churches?

To be taught this lesson by the lips of John Ruskin was an experience never to be forgotten. When we were with him he had not finished deciphering the meanings of the designs, contained in the stone quatrefoils, illustrating the messages of the prophets. It needed a Biblical student, as well versed in the text of the Minor Prophets as John Ruskin, to interpret each obscure allusion; and it was evident that the medieval sculptors who had worked at these designs, were as well versed in the text of Scripture as the Professor himself. There is no greater fallacy than the popular idea that the study of the Bible was introduced at the Reformation. The Professor would not allow us to admire the Madonna over the South Porch as much as we would fain have done. In '*The Bible of Amiens*' (Ch. iv. 1-7) he says 'everybody must like the pretty French Madonna in the middle of it, with her head a little aside and her nimbus twitched a little aside too, like a becoming bonnet. A Madonna in decadence she is, though, for all, or rather by reason of all, her prettiness and her gay soubrette's smile.'

In like manner he spoke of her to us. Once he accused a member of the party of not attending, and he ingeniously turned all the meanings of the sculptures to her confusion, especially the group of the Foolish Virgins, pointing it out to her as the supreme example of the sin of not attending.

Our English Cathedrals also were once great illuminated Bibles, easily read by the unlearned, but the continuity of their teaching was broken at the Reformation; we have to go to foreign countries to learn what they once stood for to the people of England.

It was, probably, some thought of the contrast between the splendid lessons, still legible for all who care to read them, of the sculptured figures at Amiens, and the meaningless modern figures in the old niches of the south porch of Canterbury, that made the Professor say so sadly to the Canterbury shopkeeper, 'There is no Canterbury Cathedral now.' He would sadly feel the same contrast between the magnificent sixteenth-century wood-carvings of the choir stalls at Amiens—with Scripture histories in them and stories of common, human life as well—and the mechanical lifeless carvings of the modern Choir Stalls of Canterbury.

The Professor was always ready to follow the advice given by him to the traveller in the 'Bible of Amiens'—'to stop and buy bonbons or tarts' on the way to the Cathedral; he was also always ready to give to beggars at the church door, which he tells the traveller to do. The figure in the grey suit was well known to all the beggars of Amiens.

Only on one occasion were we unwilling to follow him to the Cathedral. We heard a man, in a shop where we had gone with him to buy photographs, telling him that, at that moment, the monks of two different orders were being forcibly ejected from their monasteries, and that tumults were expected, near the railway station. We fondly hoped, when we left the shop, that the Professor would lead us to the region of disturbance; but, with a serene smile, he said 'Come, my children, let us look at the Cathedral by the sunset light.' We obediently followed him, but, as soon as he went in to rest, we said 'To the railway station!' and ran in search of adventure; but we were too late. The tumult—if tumult there had ever been—was over, and the streets were quiet and dull as usual.

The vergers of Amiens often displeased the Professor by their insistence on the least interesting objects of the church, such as a bloated angel, with a tear on its cheek, known as *L'enfant pleureur*. Once he alarmed the sacristan, when the church had been hung

with black for a funeral, by asking him indignantly in French 'What, in the name of all the devils, he meant by hanging those vile black rags on his beautiful Cathedral?' The rags were very vile, and were decorated with artificial tears and tinsel fringes.

We did not spend all our time in the Cathedral; our guide loved 'the rivers of waters' and the little streams running through the streets, and the long perspective of the graceful lines of French poplars and aspens. He liked the humble tokens of human labour by the river-side, the wood-sheds with piles of freshly sawn timber, and above all, the very picturesque market-boats, with prows high out of the water—the gondolas of Amiens, the Venice of Picardy. One day, when he sat to draw by the water-side, in the old town, where the refuse of a tan-yard, decayed vegetables, and river mud mingled to form one fearful odour, we asked him if he minded it, and he answered 'Not in the least, it reminds me of Venice.'

The first time we walked out with him from Amiens, he made us stop, in a bitter north-east wind, on raised ground, a little way out of the town, that we might feel the force of the autumnal blast. We obeyed; though we told him it was much too cold to stand still, and we did not like it at all. He then told us we were standing where the Roman Gate of Amiens once stood, through which St. Martin was riding, on a cold winter's day, when he divided his cloak with a naked beggar. Would we do the same? We answered 'Certainly not. That in that bitter wind we should keep every rag of clothing we possessed, however many beggars we met.' Luckily we did not meet any. It was extraordinary, on those walks, to see how nothing escaped his observant eyes. He would point out the graceful clustering of a French village round its little church, the changes of the sky, and often take out a magnifying glass to examine the lichen stains on a stone, or some minute plants in the crannies of an old wall. One memorable walk was on November 2, when, as we returned to the town along the river bank, he stopped to make the sketch, now at Canterbury, which was reproduced for an illustration of 'The Bible of Amiens.' '*Jour des trépassés*' is written under it in the book. In the original drawing the figures on the bank are indicated by angry black marks. The Professor has been heard to say that he had a *Louis Quatorze* hatred of mourning and funerals. He tried in vain to wear a black tie when his mother died, but he could not bear it and soon resumed the familiar blue one. On that day at Amiens he was deeply depressed by the sight of a long procession of people coming out of the town to carry wreaths

to the cemetery for the *Jour des morts*.' Nothing is so hideous as *bourgeois* French mourning; as we met group after group, some in rusty black put on for the day, others in long veils of coarse new crape, with garlands of yellow immortelles, or terrible wreaths of black and white beads, with glass tears on them, the Professor's gloom steadily deepened. He relieved his feelings by those angry black strokes in the foreground of the peaceful drawing of the Cathedral, in the sunset light, by the river-side.

Our kind host was always trying to give us pleasure, and our time was indeed delightful in the comfortable French inn. The youngest member of the party often amused the Professor by the strength of his insular prejudices; he had never left England before, and he used to dart glances of contempt and scorn at a harmless school of French boys, because they wore cloth caps with peaks and walked out two-and-two—criminal offences in the eyes of an English boy.

Our attendants at the inn, Octavie, the chambermaid, and Dieudonné, the waiter, appeared to do the work of ten ordinary servants. Our dinners were always festive, in an old room, with a blazing wood fire, and numerous lighted candles. There was generally a surprise of some kind, a new kind of sweet, a hare dressed in some remarkable way, or a pheasant with its feathers arranged as in life. Octavie and Dieudonné would come in together, whispering and nudging each other, to watch the effect of the surprise on *Monsieur*, who never failed to rise to the occasion, and to throw up hands and eyes in admiration, and to send messages of thanks and compliments to the cook. Octavie adored *Monsieur*, but in rather a patronising way.

Once, when there was a talk of dancing, he got up and gave a specimen of it himself, with long hair flying; Octavie came in and saw him and clapped her hands in delight. She came to us one day, breathless with excitement, to say some English people 'had seen the name of *Monsieur* in the visitors' book, and had said "You have, in your hotel, one of the greatest men in England." Was that true? Was *Monsieur* really a great man in his own country? If *Monsieur* was not a hero to Octavie, he was the greatest of heroes to his faithful man-servant, the companion of his wanderings, who was at Amiens, and who was with him at Brantwood when he died. Any old friend of 'the Master's' who goes there now is sure of an eager welcome from him. Two artists, who were making drawings for the Professor, sometimes joined our party at dinner—'the two disciples'

we used to call them—the younger disciple was once rebuked for using exaggerated language, especially for speaking of some one as ‘a beautiful character.’ The present writer, sitting opposite to the Professor, was asked ‘How far would you have to go to find a beautiful character?’ The obvious answer—‘only across the table’—drew from him an indulgent smile. He never liked exaggeration. He told us to look for a Renaissance house, and we found it in a back street. It was very ornate, with carved stone ornaments, and looked like a bit of Italy in the commonplace French street, but when we told him we had seen ‘the lovely old house,’ he asked what adjectives we should have left for the Cathedral if we called a Renaissance house ‘lovely.’

The Professor took us, several times, to the theatre; he loved to see good acting and to hear lively music, and we heard one quite good performance of ‘*Si j’étais Roi*’; but our last visit to that provincial theatre was one always to be remembered for its length and dullness. We dined early to be in our places at half-past six—what would London play-goers say to such an hour? At first we felt a little important, because, as we occupied the largest box in the house, we found we were attracting a great deal of attention from the native audience; and, for an hour or two, we were amused. The performance began with a short piece—a curtain raiser—then came the opera of ‘*La Fille du Régiment*’ followed by a five-act tragedy, in which a countess in a red velvet evening dress seemed to be always getting into difficulties. It was evident that the people of Amiens liked their money’s worth when they went to the theatre. The Professor was quite happy at first, and liked the smart girl with high boots, a short skirt and a drum, who played the part of the military heroine; but at half-past ten he said he felt tired, and asked if we should mind if he left us, as he had to get up early for his work. With his usual exquisite courtesy, he said that perhaps we could return without him, as we had a brother with us, and as he would leave his manservant to walk back with us. We tried in vain to be allowed to go with him, but he said he would on no account spoil our pleasure. When he had gone we agreed that if the performance lasted till day-break we would stay till the curtain fell and the fiddles squeaked their last squeak, rather than let him think that our enjoyment was not so great as he had imagined. It gave us a little amusement to watch his man, sound asleep in the pit, his tired head falling on the shoulder of a stout Frenchwoman who sat next to him. We

allowed ourselves a little relaxation, each member of the party taking it in turn to sit at the back of the box, and leave off watching the performance. It was a point of honour for those in front to keep the 'back-bencher' informed of what was going on on the stage that all might be able to pass an equally good examination the next day, if the Professor questioned us as to the plot of that French tragedy. At half-past twelve the curtain really went down, the audience rose to its feet, the man-servant woke up, and came to look for us, and we were free to leave that box, where we had spent six mortal hours. Out in the cold night-air we found we were starving, and knowing how early the hotel people went to bed, we had small hope of food. When Dieudonné opened the door we asked him, humbly and pathetically, if he could get us even a little piece of bread. With a beaming smile he threw open the door of our sitting-room, where we saw lights, a blazing fire, and a table spread for supper. '*Monsieur*,' he said, 'before retiring had commanded a *petit souper* to be ready for us on our return.' What a fervent blessing we invoked on *Monsieur* for his kindly thought of us as we sat down to our midnight feast!

At the end of that happy week the Professor decided it was too cold for Paris, and we started for England, on a day of bitter wind and brilliant sunshine. Under the bright blue sky, with fine masses of flying white clouds, the little pools, in the marshy ground near the sea, shone like burnished steel, the dead rushes on their banks, showing almost white against the deep, shining blue. We landed at Folkestone, in the glow of a splendid sunset, and very sadly we there parted with our kind and dear friend and companion, as his way led to London, and ours back to Canterbury.

The oldest member of that company—the Professor himself—lies, as all men know, among the mountains in Coniston churchyard, close to his favourite lake of Coniston; the youngest has a lonely grave in the far off prairies of Manitoba; but the other three, when they meet, often talk of that happy week, long ago, spent with the beloved Professor, in the old French town.

CLAUDIA E. GALE.

*THORLEY WEIR.*¹

BY E. F. BENSON.

CHAPTER II.

DAWN was brightening in the sky though the sun was not yet risen when Charles Lathom awoke next morning in the tent by the river-side. Close by him in the narrow limits of their shelter his brother Reggie was lying on his back still fast asleep with mouth a little parted, a plume of tumbled hair falling over his forehead, and a bare brown arm and shoulder outside the sheet in which he was loosely wrapped. Late last night, after they had got back from their moonlit drift down the river, Reggie, who, to do him justice, had done all the paddling so as to leave Charles free to serenade, saw the propriety of one dip in the pool below the weir before bed, and had come back into the tent dripping and refreshed and glistening, and without further formality of drying, had curled himself up and gone to sleep with a mocking reference to the lady of the punt. The picture of him taking a header into the pool, now on the point of completion, leaned against the tent-side, and a couple of bags gaping open and vomiting clothes and brushes, and a box of provisions, the lid of which did duty for a table, completed the furniture of the tent.

Charles got up quietly, so as not to disturb the sleeper, and went out into the clean dewy morning. The thickets behind their encampment were a-chirrup with the earliest bird-music of the day, and high up in the zenith a few wisps of cloud that had caught the sun not yet risen on the earth itself, had turned rosy with the dawn. The spouting of the weir made a bass for the staccato treble of the birds, but otherwise the stillness of night was not yet broken. Little ripples lapped at the side of the Canadian canoe drawn half out of the water on to a bank blue with forget-me-not, and a tangle of briar-rose with cataract of pink folded petals hung motionless over the water. Then with a sudden shout of awakened colour the first long level rays of the sun sped across the meadows, and with the sigh of the wind of dawn the world awoke.

The morning light was what Charles needed for his picture, but not less did he need his brother, for the painting of the braced

¹ Copyright, 1913, by E. F. Benson, in the United States of America.

shoulder-muscles of his arms as they pointed above his head for the imminent plunge. Sun and dappled shade from the trees that bounded the meadow just beside the weir fell on to his naked body, making here a splash of brilliant light, here a green stain of sunlight filtering through the translucent leaves, while his face and the side of his body seen almost in profile were brilliantly illuminated by the glint from the shining pool below him. But underneath these surface lights there had to be indicated the building and interlacement of the firm muscles and supple sinews of his body. He had all but finished them, he had all but recorded what he saw, but it was necessary that Reggie should stand for him just a little while more. Meantime, since it was still so early, and his brother still so profoundly dormant, there was more work to be done to the ecstatic dance of sunlight on the pool. Just at the edge the shadow of the wall of the weir lay over it, and it was deep brown with a skin of reflected blue from the sky, but a few yards out the sun kindled a galaxy of golden stars, flowers of twinkling and dazzling light.

He got his picture out of the tent, set it on its easel, and put a kettle of water on the spirit-lamp. It was still far too early to have breakfast, but a cup of tea brought presently to Reggie's bedside might tend to make him unresentful of being awakened when Charles found he could get on no further without him. So when this was ready, Charles rattled the sugar in its tin loud enough to wake not one only but seven sleepers, and Reggie sat up with a justifiable start.

'What the deuce——?' he began.

'Sorry,' said Charles. 'I'm afraid I made rather a row. But I've made some tea too. Have a cup?'

'Of course. Is it late?'

'Well, no, not very. I've been up some little time painting. But I can't get on any more without you!'

Reggie gave a great yawn.

'I suppose that means you want me to turn out, and stand with my arms up on that header-board. It's lucky I have the patience of an angel.'

'Archangel,' said Charles fulsomely. 'You've been a real brick about it.'

'And will you get breakfast ready if I come now?'

'Yes, and I'll make both beds.'

Reggie accordingly got up and glanced at the picture as he passed it on his way to the header-board,

'I suppose I am like a dappled horse, if you insist on it,' he said, 'but a devilish finely made young fellow.'

'Absolute Adonis,' said Charles, humbly. 'Oh, Reggie, stand exactly like that as long as you possibly can. That's exactly right.'

The work went on in silence after this, for the modelling of muscle and flesh below this checker of light and shade and reflection was utterly absorbing to the artist. He had tried all ways of solving this subtle and complicated problem: once he had put in the curves and shadows of the tense muscles first, and painted the diaper of sun and shade on the top of it, but that made the skin thick and muddy in texture. Once he had mapped the sunlight and surface shadows first and overlaid them with the indicated muscles, but this seemed to turn the model inside out. Then only yesterday he had seen that the whole thing must be painted in together, laid on in broad brushfuls of thin paint, so that the luminousness and solidity should both be preserved, and this method was proving excitingly satisfactory. Often during this last week he had almost despaired of accomplishing that which he had set himself to do, but stronger than his despair was his absolute determination to record what he saw, not only what he knew to be there. It was impossible for his brother to hold this tiring pose for more than a couple of minutes, and often it was difficult to get its resumption accurately. But this morning Reggie seemed to fall or rather stretch himself into the correct position without effort, and Charles on his side knew that to-day he had the clear-seeing eye and the clever co-ordinated hand. For an hour of pose and rest Reggie stood there, and then Charles stepped a few yards away from his canvas, and stood a moment biting the end of his brush, and frowning as he looked from model to picture and back again. Then the frown cleared.

'Thanks most awfully, Reggie,' he said. 'It's done: good or bad it's done.'

Reggie gave a great shout, and disappeared altogether in the pool.

'And I think it's good,' said Charles.

Charles made breakfast ready according to agreement, and the two sat for a while afterwards in the stupefaction of out-door content.

'This week has gone on wings,' said Reggie, 'and it's an awful melancholy thing to think that this is my last day here. But it's been a beauty of a week, I'm no end grateful to you for bringing me.'

Reggie had the caressing moods of a very young thing. As he spoke he left his seat and established himself on the ground, leaning back against his brother's knees and anchoring himself with a hand passed round his leg.

'I should have had to stew in Sidney Street for my week of holiday,' he went on, 'if it hadn't been for you. It was ripping of you to let me come.'

'It's I who score,' said Charles. 'You've earned your keep all right. I should have had to hire a model otherwise, or have done without one.'

'Oh, well, then we both score.'

Reggie threw away the end of his cigarette and abstracted Charles' case from his pocket.

'I must go up to town this afternoon,' he said, 'for Thistleton's Gallery opens again to-morrow morning. And there I shall sit, all July, at the receipt of custom and sell catalogues and make the turnstile click and acknowledge receipts . . . oh, a dog's life. Jove, what a lot of money some of those fellows have! There was an American who came in last week and went round the gallery with a great fat white man called Craddock who often comes and shows people round. I rather think he is Thistleton, and owns the place. I say, Charles——'

Reggie broke off suddenly.

'Why, I believe it was he who was in the punt last night,' he said, 'and was standing on the lawn with that girl you sang at——'

'Didn't notice him particularly,' said Charles.

'No, you were noticing somebody else particularly. But I feel sure it was he. As I say, he was taking an American round last week, who bought a couple of little Dutch pictures. He stopped at my desk on the way out and borrowed my pen and wrote a cheque for £5000 right straight off, without winking. I remember he said he was going to post-date it. But he didn't tip me.'

'I don't quite know what this is all about,' remarked Charles.

'Nor do I. I hoped it was just agreeable conversation. Don't you find it so? But I bet you what you like that the fat white man in the punt was Craddock.'

Reggie lay further back against his brother's legs.

'I see a great tragedy ahead,' he said, 'with inquests and executions. Craddock is about to marry the girl of the punt, and Charles will cut his throat, and——'

'Whose throat?' asked Charles.

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'His own or Craddock's. Perhaps Craddock's first and his own afterwards. Then there will be a sensational trial, and I can't bother to make up any more. Are you going to paint all the morning, Charles?'

'No, none of it. It's enough for to-day to have finished you. I shall stop down here a day or two more and do another sketch after you have gone. I'm at your disposal this morning.'

'Then let us do nothing for a long time, and then bathe for a long time, and then do both all over again. Lord, I wish I was an artist like you, instead of a doorkeeper, to slop about all day in delicious places, and do exactly what you like best in the world, which is to paint.'

'It would make it completer if anybody wanted best in the world to buy what I had painted,' remarked Charles.

'But you sold two water colours the other day for three pounds each,' remarked the consolatory Reggie. 'That's as much as I earn in a month.'

'It might happen oftener,' said Charles. 'By the way I heard from Mother last night.'

'A nice woman,' said Reggie.

'Quite. She sent me another sovereign in case funds had run low. When you get back you will find she has been living on tea and toast because she didn't feel hungry.'

Reggie gave a huge sigh.

'I wish a man might marry his mother,' he observed. 'I should certainly marry her and we would ask you and the punt-girl to stay with us.'

'Very kind,' said Charles.

These two young men who were enjoying so open-aired a week of June by the Thames-side were the only children of the widow whom they kindly agreed to regard as 'a nice woman.' They had been brought up in easy and well-to-do circumstances, and educated at public schools, until the suicide of their father a little more than a year ago had disclosed a state of affairs that was appalling as it was totally unexpected. He was a jobber on the Stock Exchange and partner in a firm of high repute, but he had been privately indulging in a course of the wildest gambling, and he could not face the exposure which he knew could no longer be avoided. The sale of the pleasant country home at Walton Heath, and the disposal of all that could be converted into cash, had been barely sufficient to

make an honourable settlement of his unimagined debts. Neither his wife nor either of the boys had ever dreamed of the possibility of such a situation : never had it appeared that he had had the slightest anxiety with regard to money. His self-control had been perfect until, as with the breaking of some dam, it had given way altogether in ruin and destruction. Till that very moment he had been the gayest and youngest of that eager little family party, all of whom brought an extraordinary lightness and zest to the conduct of their unclouded lives. Charles had already left school for three years when the stroke fell, and was studying in a famous *atelier* in Paris, while Reggie, still at Marlborough, was devoting as much time as he could reasonably be expected to spare from athletic exercises to the acquiring of foreign tongues with a view to the diplomatic service. They had both been instantly sent for by their mother, who met her husband's death with a fortitude that never wavered. It was not long that they had to wait for the explanation of the utterly unlooked-for catastrophe, for a very short examination of his private papers showed the extent of his defalcations and the imminence of the crash. Willingly, had it been possible, would she have kept from her sons the knowledge that he had killed himself, bearing alone the unshared secret, but an explanation of accident was impossible. Equally impossible was it to conceal the miserable cause of it.

It was on the evening of Charles' return from Paris, as they sat in the still house that till to-day had always rung with jollity, while heathery sweetness and the resinous odour of pines came in at the open windows that she told them everything, quite shortly, and when that was done and they were still half stunned with the sudden horror that had blackened life, she rallied her own courage by awakening theirs.

'You know it all, my darlings,' she said, 'and now whenever you think of it, and for a long time it will always be in your thoughts, you must think of it all as some dreadful mistake that dear Dad made, something he never meant at all. He got his troubles muddled up in his head till he didn't know what he was doing. He felt he couldn't bear it, just as sometimes he used to call out when we were playing some silly game like Animal Grab, "I can't bear it : I can't bear it." Oh Charles, my darling, don't cry so awfully. We've got to go straight ahead again, with all our courage undimmed, and show that we can face anything that God chooses to send us.'

She waited a little, comforting now one and now the other.

'It was all a mistake,' she went on, 'and we must never allow ourselves to think that it was the Dad we know who did it. He wasn't himself: trouble had made him forget himself and all of us just for a moment. We will think about that moment as little as we can, and then only as a mistake, but we will think constantly and lovingly of the dear Dad we have known all these years, who was so loving and tender to all three of us, and whom we knew as so gay and light-hearted. We will have him constantly in our thoughts like that, that and all the loving-kindness of the years in which we laughed and loved together. And if we can't help, as we shan't be able to do, thinking with a sort of wondering despair of that blunder, that mistake, we must remember that, somehow or other, though we can't explain how, it is and was even then in the hands of God.'

It had been no vague piety or bloodless resignation that had inspired her then, nor in the year that followed, and it had required a very full measure of the essential spirit of youth, which never sits down with folded hands, but despises resignation as it despises any other sort of inaction, to bring them all to the point where they stood to-day. Whether the boys helped their mother most, or she them, is one of those problems of psychological proportions into which it is unnecessary to inquire, since each had been throughout the year essential to the others. For if there had been no jolly boys coming home at evening to Mrs. Lathom in their lodgings in the meagre gentility of Sidney Street, she could no more have got through her industrious day with hope never quenched in her heart than could they if there had been no mother ready to welcome them. She, without waiting a day after they moved to London, invested a few pounds of their exiguous capital in buying a type-writing machine, and before long, by dint of unremitting work, was earning a wage sufficient, with Reggie's office salary, to keep the three of them in independence and adequate comfort, as well as to pay for a slip of a dilapidated studio in a neighbouring street, where Charles toiled with all the fire of his young heart and swiftly growing skill of hand at his interrupted studies.

It was for him, of all the three, that life was most difficult, since he was an expense only to the others, and it required all the young man's courage to persevere in work which at present brought in almost nothing. But his mother's courage reinforced his: while it was possible for him to continue working, it would be a cowardly

surrender to give up tending the ripening fruit of his years in Paris, and let the tree wither, and turn his brushes, so to speak, into pens, and his palette into an office stool. Besides, he had within him, lying secret and shy but vitally alive, the unalterable conviction of the true artist that his work was ordained to be art, and that where his heart was there would sufficient treasure be found also. But it was hard for him, even with the endorsing sincerity of his mother's encouragement, to continue being the drone of the hive so far as actual earning was concerned, and it had demanded the utmost he had of faith in himself and love for his art to continue working with that ecstasy of toil that art demands, at all that which his education needed, and not to grudge days and weeks spent in work as profitless from the earning point of view as he believed it to be profitable for his own artistic equipment. Drawing had always been his weak point, and hour after interminable hour from casts or from the skeleton, properties saved from the lavish Paris days, he would patiently copy the framework of bones and patiently clothe them in their appropriate muscles and sinews. As must always happen, long weeks of work went by without progress as noticed by himself, until once and once again he found himself standing on firm ground instead of floundering through bogs and quicksands which endlessly engulfed his charcoal and his hours, and knew that certain haltings and uncertainties of line troubled him no longer. But he made no pause for self-congratulation but continued with that mingling of fire and unrelenting patience which is characteristic of the true and inspired learner. Colour and the whole complex conception of values, which go to make up the single picture, instead of a collection, however well rendered, of different objects was naturally his : he had by instinct that embracing vision that takes in the subject as a whole.

The heat of the morning disposed to quiescence, and the two boys with the spice of meadow-sweet and loose-strife round them, and the coolness of the running water, drowsily booming, to temper the growing swelter of the day, talked lazily and desultorily, concerned with these things, for a long time after breakfast was over. But they were vividly concerned with them no more : to each the opening pageant of life was more engrossing than the tragedy of the past ; being young they looked forward, where the middle-aged would have dwelt with the present, and the old have mumbled and starved with the past. But to them it was but dawn, and the promise of day was the insistent thing, and there was no

temptation to dwell in ruins, and conjure back the night. But before long the itch for activity, in spite of their resolve of a lazy morning, possessed each, and Reggie fervidly washed up the used crockery of breakfast, while Charles went up the few yards of path that lay between the tent and the side of the weir, to behold again the picture he had left standing on its easel. In his heart he knew it was finished, but in the eagerness of his youth he almost looked forward to some further brushful of inspiration. He would not touch what he knew was good: he hoped only to find something that could be touched with advantage.

He turned a sharp corner, where willows screened the weir; his picture was planted within a dozen yards of him. But between him and his picture was planted a big white-faced man who was regarding it so intently that he did not hear the swish of the parted willows. It was not till Charles was at his elbow that Craddock turned and saw him.

And he put into his manner the deference which he reserved for duchesses and talent.

'I have come to your private view,' he said, 'without being asked, and it was very impertinent of me. But really this is my second visit. I had my private view yesterday, when I looked at your picture from a punt in which I happened to be. I had just a couple of glimpses at your work before this. You have been very fortunate in your inspiration since then. The Muse paid you a good visit this morning.'

Charles said nothing, but his eyes questioned this intruder, giving him a tentative welcome. But before the pause was at all prolonged the tentative welcome had been changed into a wondering and tremulous expectancy. Were there fairies still by the Thames-side? Was this fat white man to prove a fairy?

'You have painted an admirable picture,' continued the possible fairy, 'and the handling of the most difficult part of all—of course you know I mean the lights and shadows on that delightful figure—is masterly. Of course there are faults, plenty of them, but you can see, and you can draw, and you can paint.'

Craddock saw Charles' lip quiver, and heard that it cost him an effort to command his voice.

'Not really?' he stammered.

'Unless I am much mistaken, and it has been the business of my life to seek out those who can see and draw and paint. Now I don't know your name, and assuredly I have never seen your

work before, and since it is my business also to know the names and the works of all young men who can paint, I imagine that you have your artistic début, so to speak, still in front of you. But I shall be exceedingly grateful to you if you will sell me your picture, straight away, here and now. And if you won't let me have it for fifty pounds, I shall have to offer you sixty.'

Charles looked vaguely round, first at Craddock, then at his picture, then at the spouting weir, almost expecting to see them melt, as is the manner of dreams, into some other farrago as fantastical as this, or dissolve altogether into a waking reality.

'Do you really mean you will give me fifty pounds for it,' he asked.

'No: I will give you sixty. But don't touch it again. Take my word for it that it is finished. Or did you know that already?'

'Oh yes,' said the boy. 'I finished it an hour ago. But I came back to make sure.'

'Well then, when you leave your encampment here, will you please send it to me at this address? That is to say, if I am to have the privilege of purchasing it.'

This repetition gave reality to the interview: people in dreams were not so persistent, and Charles gave a little joyous laugh, as Craddock took a card out of his pocket and gave it him.

'Or were you thinking of exhibiting it?' he asked.

'I was meaning to have a try with it at the autumn Exhibition of the "Artists and Etchers,"' said Charles.

'I have no objection to that, provided you will let me have a little talk with you first, and put certain proposals before you.'

He looked at the picture again, and saw more surely than ever its admirable quality. It had unity: it was a picture of a boy just about to plunge into a sunlit pool, not a boy, and a pool, and some sunlight, a mere pictorial map, or painted enumeration of objects. It was all tingling with freshness and vitality and the rapture of early achievement: no artist, however skilled, if he had outgrown his youthful enthusiasm, could have done it like that, though he would easily have produced a work more technically faultless. Eagerness, though wonderfully controlled, burned in it; the joy of life shouted from it. And when he looked from it to the tall handsome boy whose grey eyes had seen that, whose long fingers had handled the brushes that recorded it, he felt sure he would not go far wrong in his own interests in making a proposal to him that would seem to him fantastical in its encouraging

generosity. Indeed he felt that there was no element of chance in the matter, for there could be no doubt about this young man's temperament, which lies at the bottom of all artistic achievement, and in this case was so clearly to be read in those eager eyes and sensitive mouth. Naturally he had a tremendous lot to learn, but a temperament so full of ardent life and romantic perception as that which had inspired this idyll of youth and sunshine and outpouring waters would never rest from the realisation of its dreams and visions.

He looked at his watch and found he had still half an hour before he need go to the station.

'Can you give me a few minutes of your time now?' he said.

'But of course. I will just tell my brother that I can't come with him at once. We were going on the river.'

'Do. Tell him to come back for you in half-an-hour. That is he, I suppose, on the header-board.'

Charles went quickly down the little path to the tent.

'Oh, Reggie,' he said. 'The fat white man has come and bought my picture. Absolutely bought it. It's real: I'm just beginning to believe it.'

Reggie stared for a moment. Then, for he had a poor opinion of his brother's business capacities:

'How much?' he demanded.

'Sixty pounds. Not shillings, pounds. And he wants to talk to me now, so come back for me in half-an-hour. He says I can paint, and somehow I think he knows.'

'Bless his fat face,' said Reggie. 'We'll let him have it at his own price. Anything for the model? I think the model deserves something.'

'He shall get it,' cried Charles.

Reggie caught hold of his brother by the shoulders, and danced him round in three wild capering circles.

Arthur Craddock had sat himself down on the steps that led to the header-board waiting for Charles' return. He had turned the picture round, so that he saw it in a less perplexing light, and found that he had no need to reconsider his previous conclusions about it. It was brimful of lusty talent, and there seemed to him to be a hint of something more transcendent than talent. There was a really original note in it: it had a style of its own, not a style of others, and though he felt sure that the artist must

have studied at Bonnart's in Paris, there was something about the drawing of it, which had never been taught in that admirable school. And the artist was so young : there was no telling at what he might not arrive. Craddock had a true reverence for genius, and he suspected genius here. He also had a very keen appreciation of advantageous financial transactions, which he expected might be gratified before long. For both these reasons he awaited Charles' return with impatience. He was prepared to make his proposal to him at once, if necessary, but he felt he would prefer to see more of his work first.

Charles did not tax his patience long : he came running back.

'Let us begin at the beginning, like the catechism,' said Craddock. 'What is your name ?'

'Charles Lathom.'

'And mine is Arthur Craddock. So here we are.'

Craddock was capable of considerable charm of manner and a disarming frankness, and already Charles felt disposed both to like and trust him.

'Your work, such as I have seen of it,' Craddock went on, 'interests me immensely. Also it makes me feel a hundred years old, which is not in itself pleasant, but I bear no grudge, for the means'—and he pointed at the picture—'excuse the effect. Now, my dear Lathom, be kind and answer me a few questions. You studied with Bonnart, did you not ?'

'Yes, for two years.'

'Only that ? You used your time well. But who taught you drawing ?'

Charles looked at him with a charmingly youthful modesty and candour.

'Nobody,' he said. 'I couldn't draw at all when I left Bonnart's. Of course I don't mean that I can draw now. But I worked very hard by myself for the last year. I felt I had to learn drawing for myself : at least Bonnart couldn't teach me.'

'And have you copied much ?'

'I copy in the National Gallery. I try to copy the English masters.'

'There is no better practice, and you will do well to keep it up, provided you do plenty of original work too. But of course you can't help doing that. I should like to see some of your copies, unless you have sold them.'

Charles laughed.

'Not I, worse luck,' he said. 'Indeed, I have only done bits of pictures. You see——'

He was warming to his confession: the artist within him bubbled irrepressibly in the presence of this man who seemed to understand him so well, and to invite his confidence.

'You see, I didn't care so much about copying entire pictures,' he said. 'It wasn't Reynolds' grouping—is that fearfully conceited?—that I wanted to learn and to understand, but his drawing, ears, noses, hands—I find I can manage the composition of my picture in a way that seems to me more or less right, and can see the values, but the drawing—that was what I wanted to get. And it has improved. It was perfectly rotten a year ago.'

A further idea lit its lamp in Craddock's quick brain.

'You shall show me some of your studies,' he said. 'And should you care to copy a Reynolds, I feel sure I can get you a good commission, if your copies are anything like as good as your original work. Do tell me anything more about yourself that you feel disposed to.'

Charles brushed his hair back off his forehead. Craddock's manner was so supremely successful with him, that he did not know that it was manner at all. He felt he could tell him anything: he trusted him completely.

'I studied with Bonnart for two years,' he said, 'and then there came a crash. My father died, and we were left extremely poor, in fact we were left penniless. Perhaps you remember; he killed himself. My mother earns money, so does Reggie, my brother. But for this last year, you see, it is I whom they have been supporting. They wanted me to go on working, and not mind about that. So I worked on: I have been very industrious, I think, but till now, till this minute, I haven't earned more than a pound or two. That's why——'

Charles had to pause a moment. The reality and significance of what was happening almost overwhelmed him. Sixty pounds meant a tremendous lot to him, but the bearing of it, that of which it was the symbol, meant so infinitely more.

'That's why I could hardly believe at first that you wanted to buy my picture,' he said. 'It seemed too big a thing to happen. It's not only the fact of sixty pounds, it's your belief that my picture is worth it, that I can paint. But if nobody ever wanted to buy or saw any merit in what I did, I don't believe I could help going on working.'

He was sitting on the ground just below the steps which Craddock occupied, and he felt a kind hand on his shoulder, as if to calm and fortify his voice which he knew was rather unsteady.

'So I guessed,' said Craddock, 'But it is just as pleasant to find that somebody does believe in you, and I assure you that I am only the first of many who will. Now about our arrangements—I will give you ten pounds at once to show you I am in earnest about buying your picture——'

'Oh, good Lord, no,' interrupted Charles.

'I should prefer it, and I will send you the balance from town. Now will you come up there to-morrow and show me what you call your bits of things? Show me them the day after to-morrow, and shall we say ten in the morning? You must give me the address of your studio and I will come there. Bring up your picture with you, but get some boy from the village to look after your tent and belongings for a night or two, if you prefer this to rooms. Very likely you will want to occupy it again. The Reynolds of which I spoke is in a house near.'

Craddock got up and pulled out a Russia-leather pocket-book.

'Here is my earnest money,' he said. 'Your studio address? Thanks.'

Charles' heart was so full that it seemed to choke his brain and his power of utterance. The first ineffable moment of recognition, dear even to the most self-reliant of artists, had come to him, and until then he had not known how nearly he had despaired of its advent. He held out his hand, and smiled and shook his head.

'It's no use my trying to thank you,' he said, 'for there are no words that are any use. But I expect you know.'

As has been said, Arthur Craddock had a profound reverence for talent quite apart from his keen pleasure in advantageous bargains, and his answer, dictated by that, was quite sincere.

'The thanks must pass from me to you,' he said. 'People like myself, who are unable to create, find their rewards in being able to appreciate the work of those like yourself. Pray do not think of me as a patron: I am a customer, but I hope I may prove to you that I am a good one. Ten o'clock, then, the day after to-morrow.'

Craddock had the invaluable mental gift of attending with a thoroughness hermetically sealed from all other distractions to the business on hand. Nor did he let his mind dribble its force into

other channels, when he wanted the whole of it to gush from one nozzle, and in this interview with Charles Lathom he had summoned his whole energy, though the expression of it was very quiet, to winning the boy's confidence, and making himself appear as a discerning and generous appreciator. It would have seemed to him a very poor policy to obtain this picture, as he could no doubt have done, for a quarter of the price he had offered for it, while on the other hand, it was unnecessary to offer twice that price (which he would willingly have done) since he could make the impression that was needful for his future scheme, at the lower figure. Economy was an excellent thing, but there was no mistake more gross than to economise at the wrong time. He was satisfied as to this, and now he dismissed the subject of Charles and his picture quite completely, and turned his whole thoughts elsewhere.

There were several directions in which it might profitably have turned ; he turned it to one in which any possible profit was remote. That morning, before he made this visit to Charles, Craddock had proposed to Joyce, who had refused him. He had not taken, and did not now take her refusal as final, and had told her so, but it had considerably surprised him. He knew well how restricted a life she led at home, how subjected she was to her father's peevish caprices and complaints, how cut off she was from the general diversions of life, and this, added to her father's assurance that he ' pleased her,' was sufficient to make him frankly astonished at her rejection of him, her refusal to walk through the door which he held open for her, and which provided so easy an escape from all these disabilities. He had put before her, though not pompously, these advantages ; he had mentioned that her father endorsed his application ; he had not omitted to lay stress on his devotion to her, and had ascertained that there was no rival in the field of her maidenly preference. It is true that he was not in love with her, but, acute man though he was in all that concerned the head, it never entered into his mind, even now, as he drove to the station, and thought intently about the subject, that this omission could have had anything to do with his ill-success. It is quite doubtful whether, even if he had been desperately in love with her, Joyce would conceivably have given any different answer ; but, as it was, the omission was so fatal to her instinct, that there could not be a moment's struggle or debate for her. She was not even sorry for him, for clearly there was nothing real to be sorry for. Otherwise, she would have sincerely regretted her inability to accept him,

for, in spite of a certain physical distaste which she felt for him, she liked him, and admired his quickness and cleverness. Had her father told her that Craddock was going to live with him, she would have hailed him with a genuine welcome. But quite apart from her feeling towards him, there was the insuperable barrier of his want of feeling towards her. Of that barrier, of the possibility of her knowing it, he, with all his cleverness, had no idea. But to Joyce the whole matter was abundantly evident; she knew he did not even love her, and his love for her was the only thing that could have made her acceptance of him ever so faintly possible. Without that all other reasons for marrying him were fly-blown; no debate, no balancings were conceivable. The scale dented the beam with its unchecked kick.

He thought over this ill-success, guessed without getting within miles of the truth at the primary reason for it, as he drove through the white sunshine from his interview with the astounded and grateful Charles, and almost immediately became aware that in the last hour his feelings for Joyce had undergone a curious intensification. Inspired, as he had been all his life by desires that were entirely material, he had been accustomed, by the aid of his clever brain, to acquire and possess them. Often, of course, he had not been able for the mere wanting, to obtain the coveted object, and hitherto it had almost invariably happened that this temporary check stirred him up to such further efforts as were necessary. A wish denied him hitherto, had connoted a wish intensified, and since there is a great deal of truth latent in the commonplace that to want a thing enough always earns the appropriate reward of desire, he had not often fainted or failed before reaching his goal. Even now, though hitherto his desire for Joyce had been scarcely more than a wish, it seemed to him different from all other wishes; it was becoming a desire as simple and primal as hunger for food or sleep. . . . Some internal need dictated it. This was disturbing, and since he had other immediate work on hand, he turned his attention to a typewritten manuscript, of which he had read part last night; he proposed to finish it in the train.

Craddock, as has been said, had a mind profoundly critical and appreciative: he had also, quite distinct and segregate, an astonishing flair for perceiving what the public would appreciate. Often he bought pictures which from an artistic point of view he thought frankly contemptible because he saw signs so subtle that they were

instinctively perceived rather than reasoned—that the public was going to see something in either an old outworn mode, or in some new and abominable trickery. He then transferred his purchases to Thistleton's Gallery, and gladly parted with them on advantageous terms. But this *flair* of his was by no means confined to mere pictorial representations, and he was always glad to read a novel or a play in manuscript, with a view to purchasing it himself, and disposing of his acquired rights to publisher or playwright. Living as he publicly did in the centre of things, an assiduous diner out and frequenter of fashionable staircases, he yet had a quiet and secret life of his own as distinct from the other as are the lives of inhabitants in adjoining houses, whose circles of friends are as diverse as bishops from ballet-dancers. He preferred to deal in the work of men who were young or unknown, and at present had not been able to get producers for their possible masterpieces. He was thus often able by liberal offers to secure an option of purchase (at a specified figure) over the output of their next few years. Often to the sick-heartedness of their deferred hopes, such prospects seemed dictated by a princely liberality, and they were gladly accepted. Scores of such plays he read and found wanting, but every now and then he came across something which, with judicious handling and backed by the undoubted influence he had with the public through the press, he felt sure he could waft into desirable havens. Only this morning by the weir-side he had found a gem of very pure ray, which he believed to be easily obtainable, and now as he read this manuscript in the train, he fancied that his jewel-box need not be locked up again yet. The public he thought to be tired of problem-dramas : they liked their thinking to be peptonised for them, and presented in a soft digestible form. Just at present, too, they had no use for high romance on the one hand, or, on the other, for subtle situations and delicate unravellings. They wanted to be shown the sort of thing that, with a little laughter and no tears, might suitably happen to perfectly commonplace and undistinguished (though not indistinguishable) persons, and in this comedy of suburban villadom, with curates and stockbrokers and churchwardens behaving naturally and about as humorously as they might be expected to behave without exciting themselves, he felt sure that he held in his hand a potential success on a large scale.

The author was young and desperately poor : he had already had a play on the boards at the first night of which Arthur Craddock had been present, which had scored as complete a failure as could

possibly have been desired to produce suitable humility in a young man. But Craddock, who always thought for himself instead of accepting the opinions of others, had seen what good writing there was in it, how curiously deft was the handling of the material, and knew that the failure was largely due to the choice of subject, though ten years ago it would probably have been welcomed as vigorously as it was now condemned. It was an excellent play of ten years ago, or perhaps ten years to come, with its lurid story too difficult for the indolent theatre-goer of this particular year to grasp, and its climax of inextricable misery. He had therefore immediately written to Frank Armstrong, the author, and at an ensuing interview told him what, in his opinion, were the lines on which to build a popular success. Then, guessing, or rather knowing, that Armstrong must have attempted drama many times before he had produced so mature a piece of work as the unfortunate 'Lane without a Turning,' he said—

'I daresay you have something in your desk at home, rather like what I have been sketching to you, which you have very likely failed to get produced before now. Send it me, and let me read it.'

It was this play 'Easter Eggs' which Craddock finished as the train slowed down into Paddington Station. It could not be described as so fine a play as that which had achieved so complete a failure, but it had all that the other lacked in popular and effective sentiment. Even to a man of Craddock's experience in the want of discernment in theatrical managers, it was quite astounding that it had ever been refused, but he could guess why this had been its fate. For there was no 'star-part' in it; there was no character, overwhelmingly conspicuous, who could dominate the whole play and turn it into a 'one-man' show. The success of it must depend on level competent acting, without limelight and slow music. It was a domestic drama without villain or hero or dominating personality, and when he again read over the list of acting managers to whom Frank Armstrong had submitted it, he saw how absurd it was to suppose that Tranby or Akroyd or Miss Loughton could ever have considered its production. But he saw also how a company of perfectly unknown artists could admirably present it, with a great saving of salaries. It needed moderate talent evenly distributed, and one part mishandled would wreck it as surely as would some ranting actor-manager who tried to force a dominant personality into the play, and only succeeded in upsetting the whole careful balance of it. Even as Craddock

drove back to his sumptuous and airless flat in Berkeley Square he jotted down a half-dozen names of those who filled minor parts in star-plays quite excellently. He wanted them without the stars.

And then, quite suddenly, his mind, usually so obedient, bolted, and proceeded at top-speed in quite another direction. Without intention, he found himself wondering what Joyce was doing, whether she would have told her father about his proposal, or confided in that astutest of grandmothers; whether she was in the punt with panting dogs, or still troubled with the undoubted indisposition of Buz, who had not been at all well, so she had told him, this last day or two. Her life seemed to him a deplorable waste of heavenly maidenhood, partly owing to a selfish father, partly, now at least, because she had not consented to waste it no longer. Youth lasted so short a time, and its possessors so often squandered it on things that profited not, ailing dogs, for instance, and swans' nests among the reeds.

Then he caught sight of his own large face in the mirror of his motor, and felt terribly old. He, too, had squandered his youth in the amassing of knowledge, in all that could have been acquired when the leap of the blood thrilled less imperatively, in the passion devoted to passionless things, in the mere acquisition of wealth, in the formation of his unerring taste and acumen. But he knew that his blood had tuned itself to a brisker and more virile pulse, since Joyce had shaken her head and smiled, and been a little troubled. Or was it over the indisposition of Buz that she was troubled?

Then, arriving at his flat, he became his own man again, and cordially telephoned to Frank Armstrong to have lunch with him.

(To be continued.)

